THE THREE KINGDOMS

A YOUNG PEOPLE'S GUIDE TO THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

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THE THREE KINGDOMS

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THE THREE KINGDOMS

A YOUNG PEOPLE'S GUIDE TO THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

BY

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WITH PREFACE BY

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PREFACE

It may be doubted if any part of a faithful clergyman's work is more fruitful than the preparation of candidates for Confirmation. For two or three months or more he gathers round him, week by week, the elder children of his flock, at their most impressionable age, when they are passing from childhood to adolescence, and instructs them in the fundamental truths of the Christian Faith, and in the great principles of the Christian Life. Other children of a larger growth, whose hearts God has touched, and who, for various reasons, have missed Confirmation at an earlier period, sit at his feet for teaching and inspiration. The opportunity of influencing for Time and for Eternity these young and eager and receptive souls is unique. Once past, it will probably never return to him again, at any rate in equal fulness.

These days of preparation are at once a time of decision, of instruction, and of enlistment in Christ's Service.

1. They are days of *decision*, when young hearts, that have felt the movement of the Holy Spirit, find themselves called upon to choose between God and the World; and often, by the Grace of God, are led to choose God and Eternal Life. To-day, in all parts of the World there are a great company of Churchmen and Churchwomen who trace their conscious Christian life, and the definite yielding of themselves to God, to their time of preparation for Confirmation.

2. They are days of *instruction*, when, in an atmosphere of prayer and expectation, systematic, practical, and spiritual teaching is given which helps to make God and Christ more real and intelligible, and gives to the Holy Spirit fresh and well-ordered material upon which

He can work for the building up of the Christian character, and can make Christ no more a mere dim historical Figure, or a distant Acquaintance, but a Companion, and Friend, and personal Saviour.

3. They are days of *enlistment* in God's Service. Confirmation has been well called "The Ordination to the Priesthood of the Laity," when, with the needs of the Church before his eyes, a wise Shepherd of souls seeks to discern what are the special gifts and capacities of his Candidates, and, like the great Householder Whom he represents, endeavours to give to every one his or her work. If multitudes of our Communicants date their decision for Christ to their Confirmation, a great host of Christian Workers remember their Confirmation as the time when, as Christ's Soldiers and Servants, they took up some definite piece of Service for Him and His Church.

This little Book, written by an experienced Parish Priest, keeps well in view this triple object of Confirmation. It will serve a double purpose. It will greatly help many a young clergyman in his work of preparation by its freshness of treatment, its apt illustrations, its clear and concise style, and the loving spirit which pervades it.

And it will enable candidates for Confirmation—especially the older ones—to amplify and to clench the lessons taught them in Class or in private interview.

It is sent forth with the earnest prayer that God may use it, in the great and difficult days that are coming, to help to "build Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land," and to deepen the spiritual life, to increase the knowledge, and to strengthen the loyalty of future generations of the children of the Church.

F. J. LIVERPOOL.

19, ABERCROMBY SQUARE, LIVERPOOL.
August 15, 1918.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Of large books dealing with the exposition and defence of the Christian Faith there is an abundance: there are also devotional works to an even greater extent. But a simple "Guide to the Christian Faith," giving a connected explanation of our religion, yet avoiding technical language and religious phraseology, does not seem so easy to find.

Continually, however, one has felt the need of it: something like this to give to Confirmation Candidates; to young lads and girls going away to school or business; and not least to parents, conscious of their duty to their children's souls as well as bodies and desirous of help in these matters. So I have ventured to bring out this little book. My experience as Vicar of a fairly large parish, and also as a Chaplain on the Western Front, coincides with that of many others, and leads me to say with them that simple teaching on great subjects, in simple ways, yet with an underlying "philosophy," is one of the real needs of to-day.

The basis of this book is my own talks to Confirmation Candidates: the opportunities of writing it came at odd moments mainly out here, although the idea of it

had been in my mind for a long time. My hope is that its publication will be justified through its being helpful to young people and parents; if it is also of any service to my clerical brethren in their work among young people, I shall feel additionally rewarded.

B. E. F., 1918. F. G. G.

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INTRODUCTION

If you turn to the Service of Confirmation in the Book of Common Prayer you will see that it is for those who have been baptised and come to " years of discretion." It is about this second requisite that a few words of introduction are necessary before we come to all that is involved in the first. The word " discretion " comes from the same Latin word that gives us the word " discern," and both really mean " choosing "—or choosing wisely after examination and thought.

Thus " years of discretion " can be called " years of choosing "—years when especially we are choosing what we will have and be and do in life. In one sense we are always " choosing " these things, but one period of life is so pre-eminently a time of choice that they are referred to here as " years of discretion." They are the years that come between our childhood when we were in the shelter of the old home under our parents' care and authority, and our manhood or womanhood when we have grown up and taken our own position in life. In childhood, most of the ' choosing ' has been done for us, and we have had to learn ' obedience ' and do what we were told. When we have grown up and are very likely settled in occupations and homes of our own, it is generally too late to make any great changes, because our ' years of discretion ' have passed, and for better or worse we have ' chosen.'

The years in between are the golden years. They are full of great opportunities, and therefore of great risks, of much promise, and also of much danger. Broadly speaking, the whole happiness and welfare of your life in the future turn upon what you do, and how you 'choose,' in your years of discretion. How often does one hear people say: "I wish I had chosen differently when I had the chance, but now it is 'too late'." Before this time, you have had practically to do as your parents said, but now you are coming to the time when you will leave the old home and go out into the world to earn your own living and be "independent." You choose what you would like to take up among the different occupations open to you; you go out more on your own account; you begin to choose even your own clothes; you start picking your own friends out of the many people that you meet; more important still, you begin to realise the attraction of the other sex and to "choose" the one with whom you look forward to spend the whole of your future life and to start a home of your own.

Then in this all-important time when you are "choosing" the whole course of your grown up life, there comes something else for you to "choose"—and this is your religion.

Hitherto very likely you have not troubled much about it, but taken it for granted, and grown up with it naturally. You have been born and brought up in a Christian land, and, if you are fortunate, in a Christian home. You have probably been accustomed to going to Church and Sunday School, and taught to "say your prayers." But now you are "going out into the world." There you will meet and hear many things that are very far from being "Christian," and thus it will be forced upon you that you have to choose, not only your work

and amusements and your friends, but also your "religion."

In your own way, and for yourself, you will have to answer a celebrated question asked of old :

"*What shall I do with Jesus, who is called Christ?*"

It is this period, your all-important "years of discretion," that the Church very fittingly declares is the time for Confirmation. While you are choosing all the things that are to shape your future life, it reminds you of the greatest choice : greatest, because on it, really and truly, turn the true happiness and blessing of all the rest. And in order that you may choose all the better, the Church directs that the meaning of religion, and the truths of the Faith of Christ shall be carefully explained to you.

For realise that, whether confirmed or not, you have to decide for yourself the question above asked : "What shall I do in my life with Jesus Christ?" You can no longer take your religion unthinkingly and "for granted," but you must consciously choose for yourself in this, as in other things.

Then, if you do decide to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Master of your life, you will have the duty, opportunity and privilege of declaring it in your *Confirmation.*

So have these thoughts in your mind all the time that you are reading the following pages. In them the main truths of the Christian Faith are explained to you. As you read, pray that in this, as in all things, God will direct and rule your heart "in the ways of His Laws, and in the paths of His Commandments."

THY way, not mine, O Lord,
However dark it be!
Lead me by Thine own hand,
Choose out the path for me.

Smooth let it be or rough,
It will be still the best;
Winding or straight, it leads
Right onward to Thy rest.

I dare not choose my lot;
I would not if I might;
Choose Thou for me, my God,
So shall I walk aright.

The kingdom that I seek
Is Thine; so let the way
That leads to it be Thine,
Else I must surely stray.

Take Thou my cup, and it
With joy or sorrow fill,
As best to Thee may seem;
Choose Thou my good and ill.

Choose Thou for me my friends,
My sickness or my health;
Choose Thou my cares for me,
My poverty or wealth.

Not mine, not mine, the choice,
In things or great or small;
Be Thou my Guide, my Strength,
My Wisdom, and my All.

PART I

LIFE AND ITS PROBLEM

CHAPTER I

THE THREE KINGDOMS

WHEN you were born into the world, you were not simply brought here and left like a 'pebble on the beach,' but you came into a vast, organised state of existence. You came, as a little, living, human soul into "three kingdoms," which correspond with the three things that you 'are,' or have. To a certain extent these kingdoms are independent of each other, for they are concerned with different "parts" of you: again, to a certain extent, they coincide, because your different "parts" all make up only one life, which is your 'soul.' *You are a soul.*

1. In the first place, you are born with a physical body into the "Animal Kingdom." From this point of view, you are simply a little human animal and your bodily life depends upon your keeping the laws of your "animal kingdom" or body. If you disregard these laws, or they are disregarded for you by your parents, you suffer for it, and even cease to live. Good, wholesome food and clothing, fresh air, proper use and care of your body are necessary all your life, if you are to live happily and well.

2. Secondly, you are born with a "mind," into a "Human Kingdom." You are born into an organised state of society, and eventually will have to earn, or make your living, if you are 'to live.' Therefore you

have to ' learn the laws ' of your human kingdom, and cannot disregard them any more than you can disregard those of your ' animal kingdom ' if you are to live happily and well. Thus you go to school, in the first place : afterwards you ' learn the laws ' of the particular occupation that you take up, and then there are the ' political laws ' of the human kingdom into which you have been born as a subject. These you will also have to observe and keep.

3. Thirdly, you have been born with " a spirit," into the " Divine Kingdom." Later on, we shall speak more of your spirit : just for the present, remember that there is this kingdom, corresponding with your spirit and that, as before, if you want to live happily and well in the best and highest sense, you must keep the laws of your ' Divine Kingdom,' and live in accordance with them as well as the others.

So when you were born, you were born as a little subject of these three kingdoms and were " enrolled " in them. The Animal and Human Kingdoms we can, to a certain extent, bracket together. The " Human Kingdom " is called by another name—the State. Every little child is born into some State or other of the many that are in the world. In your case, probably you were born in the British Empire and so became a little subject of King George V. This is your human kingdom. By the law of the land, your parents had to go to a Registrar's office and " register " you within six weeks of your birth. Your name and birthday were written in a big book belonging to the State, and you were thus enrolled as a little subject of your Human Kingdom.

Your ' consent ' was not obtained beforehand, for of course you could not know anything about it. There was " nothing to pay " and no examination to pass

when you were thus registered, because it was your *birthright*, being born within the State. Henceforth you were under the protection of the British Flag and Government, and if your life were threatened by an enemy, the duty of the State would be to protect its little subject. You, on the other hand, are expected, as you grow up, to abide by the laws of your State, and, more than that, to strive to be a good and useful citizen. And you must remember that unless you formally disown it, you are always a subject. Many grow up diseased, helpless or bad, and even become criminals, but useless and expensive though they are, they are still subjects, because it is their "birthright."

Now, after you were born, your father and mother probably did something else for you—yet something similar. Not only did they register you as a subject of your human kingdom, but, if they were Christians, they took you one day to church, and there you were "baptised." After the service, your parents went into the vestry, and there your name and birthday were written in another big book, belonging to "the Church of Christ." You were thus enrolled as a little subject of the Divine Kingdom, to which you also belong. Again, your consent was not asked and you did not know anything about it when you were baptised, because once more it is your *birthright*, with nothing to pay and no examination to pass. Henceforth you are a little citizen of the Divine Kingdom, under its protection and subject to its laws. As with your Human Kingdom, so with the Divine; if you are registered in the one, and baptised in the other, you always are a subject, unless you formally renounce it. You may grow up a bad member of both kingdoms, or a good one, but you always are a member and a subject.

There is another thing to remember. Politically

speaking, human kingdoms are many, divided according to race and position and language, or sometimes in spite of them. You have to belong to one or another. Also, as things are at present, the Divine Kingdom is divided into different parts and you belong to one of them. But ultimately, really, in the eyes of God, the Divine Kingdom must be one, because God is the Creator and Heavenly Father of the whole human race, and we are all His children, without distinction of race or colour. Even politically, and especially now under the agony of the present war, we look forward to a world-wide commonwealth and federation of all nations, in which the spiritual brotherhood of man will be "politically" recognised. It may be only a dream, an ideal; yet by such things men most greatly live. Of the "Divine Kingdom" the same is true, only more so, for it was in the mind and on the lips of its founder Jesus Christ. Read His last prayer in St. John, xvii. So always have these things in mind, and loyally though you may keep to your own nation and Church, yet do not lose sight of the 'greater vision beyond,' or think that outside your own 'part' there is nothing that is good or pleasing unto God.

Into such a world as this were you born; with its three kingdoms and their laws. These laws are obviously of very different kinds; some are more important than others; some are changeable, others are not; sometimes the 'kingdoms' come into collision with each other, and then great problems and difficulties arise. But on the whole remember that if you want to *live*, well and happily in the highest sense, you must keep the laws of all your kingdoms.

Do not look on them with fear and dislike! They are a great strength and help, protection and guide to those who observe them, just as those who break them,

sooner or later, pay the penalty of doing so. Do not think of the laws as simply designed to 'trip you up,' for the sake of punishing and inflicting suffering on you! Wise, good laws are always designed to help and guide you, just as medicine is given to you, not because it is nasty, but to make you well and for your real good. A true guide is one who does not simply look for an easy path, but one who, *first of all*, makes sure that he is guiding you along the one that will lead you safely to your journey's end. So look on the laws as strong, wise friends, and follow them with courage and confidence.

"This God is our God for ever and ever:
He will be our guide even unto death."
(Psalm xlviii, 14).

CHAPTER II

THE AGREEMENT OF LIFE

WHEN, at our Registration and Baptism, we respectively enter "officially" the Human and Divine Kingdoms—the State and the Church—of which we become members, we incur responsibilities as well as receive privileges. As with the State, so with the Church: if we are entitled to claim its benefits and protection, so we are naturally expected to do our part, obey its laws and seek to be true and faithful subjects. The fact has already been noticed that, in varying ways, one great principle runs through all our three kingdoms; that is, to live well and happily it is necessary to observe their laws.

It is with the third, or the Divine Kingdom, that we are going to concern ourselves in these chapters. You must not think, however, that it has nothing to do with the other two, for the three are inevitably mingled, since they deal with human beings, who belong to them all. The Divine Kingdom is necessarily the highest and greatest, for it deals with the 'eternal part' of us, but it embraces, not ignores, the other two. The things that relate to the 'animal' and the 'human' part of you are a matter of interest and concern to the Divine Kingdom, for God has created all, although the third kingdom more directly deals with our spirit.

So of the third, or Divine Kingdom, let us write and think. As you may gather from what is written at the beginning of this chapter, your entry into the Divine Kingdom at your Baptism is not simply an 'entry' and nothing more. There are privileges that you receive, and responsibilities that you incur. In fact, your Baptism is the occasion of your making an "Agreement for Life" in which certain things are promised to you, and on the other hand, certain things are promised by you, as you enter the Divine Kingdom. The same is true of your "Registration" as you enter the Human Kingdom. Of course, an agreement implies that there are two parties concerned. When you were "registered," really it involved an agreement between you and the King, as the head of the State. He promised to protect you; you promised to observe the laws. Similarly, your Baptism involves an agreement between you and God.

At your Baptism, as at your Registration, both parties concerned act through an agent. In the latter case, the Registrar acts in the name of the King, and your parents do so on your behalf. When you were baptised, God acted through His minister, and your Godparents spoke in your name, but you must always remember that the 'agreement' is between you and God. Three things were promised on either side. On His part, God promised that (1) He would receive you into His Kingdom as His child, and that (2) you would not only be a subject of His Kingdom, but also (3) a living part of it. On your side, you promised God that you would always (1) give up what is wrong, (2) believe what is true and (3) do what is right. Then, just as a legal agreement is not only written out, but always 'stamped,' so similarly your agreement with God was said aloud and stamped!

Really, in a legal document, the stamp is a tax, and not of the essence of the agreement, but a stamped agreement generally has a more solemn character than an unstamped one. So if you look at the Service in your Prayer-book, you will see that after you are assured that the Promises He has made God will "assuredly keep and perform," your promises are made in your name, and then the 'stamp' is put on you yourself! You are signed on the forehead with the sign of the Cross—the sign of Christianity—in token that you will not be "ashamed" of it, and will faithfully keep your part unto your life's end. You will continually find that 'ridicule' is one of the hardest things to bear in life. More people are laughed out of their religion than are persuaded, or proved, or even persecuted out of it! Always keep this 'danger' in mind, and remember that when you were baptised, and signed with the Cross, it was in token that you should not be "*ashamed*" of it.

The Agreement.

"*We receive this child into the Congregation of Christ's flock, and do sign him* (*her*) *with the sign of the Cross* (✠) *in token that hereafter* (*s*)*he shall not be ashamed of Christ Crucified, but manfully fight under His banner against sin, the world and the devil, and continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his* (*her*) *life's end.*"

If you now look on to the end of the Baptismal Service, you will see that *really* it is left unfinished! There is no Grace, or Benediction; the last two paragraphs are an exhortation to your Godparents to take you home, see that you are taught in the Christian Faith, trained to live a Christian life and then brought to the Bishop to be Confirmed by him.

If you now turn to the Confirmation Service, you will see that it does not begin all over again, but simply continues the other Service where it left off. It begins with reminding you of what your Godparents did for you in your Baptism, and asks you whether you will now with your own mouth and consent ratify the solemn vow and promise made for you. If you are willing and ready to do this, you will then be "confirmed." You do not make a *new* 'agreement' with God, but promise yourself in your 'years of discretion' to keep the one already made. The two Services are really one, though separated by a long interval. In this interval of years you are to be taught the Christian Faith, so that you can understand the meaning of your admission into the Divine Kingdom.

So between the Baptismal Services—there are three of them for different occasions—and the Confirmation Service you will find the "Catechism." This is a brief explanation of and guide to the Christian Faith. It is written in rather old-fashioned language, as is a good deal of the Prayer-book, but, like the latter, it is very beautiful, and in time you will grow to appreciate and value it, once you understand its meaning.

So we will refer very much to the Catechism, as we start to examine our Agreement of Life, made in our Baptism and ratified in our Confirmation.

A CATECHISM,

THAT IS TO SAY,

An instruction to be learned of every person, before he be brought to be confirmed by the Bishop.

Question.

WHAT is your Name ?
Answer. *N.* or *M.*
Question. Who gave you this Name ?
Answer. My Godfathers and Godmothers in my Baptism ;

wherein I was made (1) a member of Christ, (2) the child of God and (3) an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

Question. What did your Godfathers and Godmothers then for you ?

Answer. They did promise and vow three things in my name. First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh. Secondly, that I should believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith. And thirdly, that I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life.

Question. Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe, and to do, as they have promised for thee ?

Answer. Yes verily ; and by God's help so I will. And I heartily thank our heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this state of salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. And I pray unto God to give me his grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life's end.

CHAPTER III

THE FIRST DOUBLE PROMISE

It is the Agreement of Life that is referred to in the Catechism where it says about your Baptism : " Wherein I was made (1) a member of Christ, (2) the child of God and (3) an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven." Immediately there follow the three things that you promise : (1) I should renounce the devil and all his works . . . (2) Believe all the articles of the Christian Faith, (3) obey God's holy will and commandments and walk in the same all the days of my life."

Now these three promises on either side really correspond to each other, and we will look at each pair in turn.

I. God promises that He will receive you as a " Member of Christ." The word " member " comes from the Latin " membrum," which means a limb. A limb or member implies more than a part ; a member is a part of a *living* thing : *a living part.* Thus we call a page a part of a book, not a member. But your finger is not only a part of your body, it is also a member. If you tear a page out of a book it may spoil the book, but *hurts* neither it nor the page. But if you break or cut your finger, it not only hurts your finger, but hurts your whole body as well.

With these ideas in mind as to what a ' member ' is,

let us try to see what is meant by being a "member of Christ." We become a "living member" of Christ, *i.e.*, we become not only parts of Him, but living parts of Him. Jesus Christ himself taught us this. Between Him and those who believe in Him there is not only friendship and companionship, but a connection that is not *mechanical*, but *organic*. That is, we become parts of Him, not merely as parts of a machine, but as members of a living whole, a living body, that is only 'fully alive' when all the different 'parts' are alive. In the last words that Jesus had with His disciples in the night that He was betrayed, He said: "I am the Vine: ye are the Branches." Our life is "Branch Life": we really live only when we are "in the Vine," and all our life comes from Him. (Read St. John, xv, 1–8.)

In his first Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul teaches the same truth when he pictures Jesus Christ as the head, His Church as the body, and we as individual members. (Read 1 Cor. xii, 12–27.)

Now this is the first promise that God makes to us when we are baptised. He will make us "members of Christ," *i.e.*, join us on, or "graft" us in, as little living parts of the great spiritual Body of Christ, who is the Head, the Everlasting Vine. The bond between us and Him is a real and living one. What affects Him, affects you. On this connection being maintained depends your spiritual life. If you are cut, or cut yourself off, it is death to you and loss to Him: and if you suffer, remember that He feels it too. Let this great and wonderful 'gift of God' always be to you a real thing; it will inspire, comfort and help you in life far more than you can at present realise.

Then let us turn to our corresponding promise to God. In 'reply' to His making us "members of Christ," we make the promise to "renounce" various

evil things. We promise that if we " belong to Christ," we will not belong to anything or anyone else.

You see, we cannot belong to two mutually exclusive things, any more than " a branch " can be on two different plants at the same time. We have to be on one or the other ! And so we promise that if God makes us members of Christ, we will give up " membership with the devil and all his works." We promise to " give up what is wrong."

Some of the words in the " Vow of Renunciation " as set forth in the Catechism need explaining. We promise to " renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh." Of course, it is obvious that we must have nothing to do with the " devil and all his works," which are *bad in themselves*. The other two sentences refer to *wrong* uses of things that are good or bad according as we use them. Christianity never says that created things are bad in themselves, as many old heresies and some Eastern religions do. On the contrary, " God saw everything that He had made, and behold ! it was *very good*. (Gen. i, 31.)

" Created things " are, as it were, neutral ! They become good or bad to us according to the use we make of them. What we promise to " renounce " is *bad uses of God's created things*. We do not promise to " renounce " the world, for it is full of " all things bright and beautiful "—but we *do* promise to give up what is wrong in it, and in its use.

Again, God made our human bodies, and Christ had one Himself and therefore for ever " consecrated it," and made it " holy." To us, it is a temple of God, a " house " in which Christ once lived, when He dwelt among us. There is a difference between " the body " and " the flesh " as St. Paul uses these words. " The body " is

what God gave us for our souls to live in, and its right and proper uses are blessed by and pleasing to God, who rejoices in all His works. But when the body is used unlawfully, it becomes "the flesh," against which "the spirit" always fights. We renounce the "sinful lusts of the flesh," that is, wrong uses of the body, just as we renounce "wrong uses of the world."

So these are the things contained in the first 'double Promise' between God and ourselves.

God says to us "You are going to belong to *Me*, and become a little member of Christ." We say to God, "We will belong to no one else, and will give up what is wrong." May He ever give us grace to want to keep to these promises, and strength to carry them out!

CHAPTER IV

THE SECOND DOUBLE PROMISE

In this one you are made " a child of God," and on your part promise to believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith. Let us first look at God's promise, in which He says that we are not only ' members of Christ,' but also His children. Here we must explain carefully two things that are often confused—soul and spirit.

Our soul is our " principle of life." It is because we have, or rather *are*, souls that we live. But our spirit is from, and of, God, who is Spirit, *Infinite Spirit*. It is His essence, His nature, if so we may term it. We Christians say that God is " Infinite Spirit " rather than " Infinite Soul." " Pantheists " and some Eastern religions think of God as the ' Infinite Soul,' the principle of life that is in all things, without any necessary character or attribute. That is true, to a certain extent, but Christianity teaches that God is also Infinite *Spirit*. As Jesus Christ said, " God is (a) Spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." (St. John, iv, 24). " Infinite Soul " is a neutral expression ; " Infinite Spirit " implies character and attributes. God is not only Eternal life, but Eternal Light (that is,

holiness) and Eternal Love. *So really we are souls that have spirit as well as mind and body.* It is *here* that we see the difference between ourselves and animals. They have bodies and also minds to a certain extent, and souls too, "after their kind," because they "live." But we have spirits as well, and these are "of God." *That* is the difference between us and the animals. It is not merely one of "*degree*"—it is one of "*kind*." Listen to some passages from the Bible. In the story of Creation, God makes created things "after their various kinds" (Gen. i, 11, 12, 21, 24, 25), but when He comes to man, He says, "Let us make man *in our image, after our likeness.*" (Gen. i, 26.) "So God created man in His own image: in the image of God created He him." (Gen. i, 27.) "He hath given us of His *Spirit.*" (1 John, iv, 13.) "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. vi, 18.)

Thus for us human beings, God is not only our Maker and Creator—as He is of all creation—but He is our *Father:* our Heavenly, *i.e.*, Spiritual Father. We have our earthly physical fathers, the fathers of our bodies, who have given us of their nature, whereby they *are* our fathers and we their children. Then we have our Heavenly Spiritual Father, the Father of our *Spirits*, which are of His own essence and nature, and which He has given us, making us thereby His children.

And God is the one Heavenly Father of all human beings, whatever their race or age or colour. It is the birthright of our race. Some may never even know it, or realise it; we all often forget it, and abuse it. But just as in our earthly relationship, however ignorant and bad a child may be, nothing alters the fact that he *is* a child of his earthly parents, so with our heavenly relationship, we *are* children of God, however much we

disregard it. It is this of which God assures us in His second Baptismal Promise. We are not only 'members of Christ,' but we are His *children* and He is our Heavenly Father.

Then, on your side, you say that you will "believe all the articles of the Christian Faith." Before we look at the definite things of one's belief, let us see what we mean by 'belief' or 'faith' in itself.

Few things are more misunderstood, and even ridiculed than "Faith." Probably you all know the familiar description of "Faith," which, unfortunately, many people take as quite accurate: "Faith is believing what you know isn't true." In this definition, as also in common ideas, Faith is supposed to be contradictory both to knowledge and reason! We have to admit that a good deal of the stigma attached to 'Faith' is largely due to an unwise and unfair employment of the word on the part of many sincere Christian believers. It is often best, and truest candidly to admit that one does not understand some things and is content to "wait and see," rather than to struggle to swallow the whole lot and so cast an air of unreality around the whole. This latter proceeding makes your religion often unreal to yourself and to other people. Remember that your religion is a living, not a dead, thing, and therefore it 'grows' with you. It is not simply something to be learned like the multiplication table, or swallowed like a pill! In a very beautiful poem by Robert Browning, called "Rabbi Ben Ezra," come the lines:

> "Grow old along with me,
> The best is yet to be.
> The last of life, for which the first was made.
> Our times are in His hand,
> Who said 'A whole I planned,'
> Trust God, see all, nor be afraid."

Think over these great words, and when you can, read the whole poem, and try to understand its meaning.

Faith is not contradictory to reason, but complementary, and both of them lead to knowledge. Reason is the faculty of the mind, as Faith is the faculty of the soul and spirit. Men are increasingly realising to-day that 'knowledge' may be of different kinds, and that 'reason' is not the only road leading to it. If we look carefully at 'life' itself and its processes, we begin to see that it does not only work step by step, and stage by stage, but also in what one can call a series of "rushes." The progress of life is more like the incoming of the tide than, say, the building of a house. There is the steady advance, but also the 'series of rushes' as one wave succeeds another in breaking on the shore. Now 'Faith' and 'Love' and the other great faculties of our life and spirit proceed often rather by rushes than 'step by step.' Both processes are equally real in the wonderful development of life, and we use both methods in the commonest things of everyday existence. They reach their greatest when we seek the "life eternal—to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent." (St. John, xvii, 3.)

So when we think of the second part of our agreement of life and realise that the bond between us is one of Father and Children, we promise that we will "believe in Him," that we will use all the faculties that we have whereby we may get into touch with, and find and know Him, even as He knows and loves us from the very beginning and on into eternity.

CHAPTER V

THE CHRISTIAN CREED

THE word "Faith" is used in two senses, between which it is necessary to distinguish. Sometimes, as in the preceding chapter, it is used 'actively,' or 'subjectively,' to describe the process itself; sometimes it is used 'passively' or 'objectively' to describe generally the objects of the process. Thus one may say "His Faith is strong," meaning a man's exercise of this faculty of his soul and spirit: or one may say "His Faith is true" —then rather meaning that the *things* in which he believes are true.

The one sense passes into the other. If a man says "I believe," you may reply: "Well, what do you believe?" And the "what" is called the 'faith,' or 'belief,' or 'Creed.'

Just at the very beginning of Christianity men were quite content to 'believe in Jesus Christ' without troubling to put into definite words what they meant by it. They knew it for a fact, and needed not to 'ask any more questions.' But very soon, force of circumstances compelled them to try to put their 'faith' into words. The children of the first Christians had to be instructed; the 'heathen' were needing the same thing; the growth of wrong opinions and the

prevalence of wrong facts in men's ideas necessitated a statement of the truth. So, through the necessities of the case, we see slowly coming into being what we call the Christian Creeds. At last, in the year 325 at Nicæa the Bishops of the whole Church gathered together and there was issued a definite statement of what the Christian 'Faith' was, which is known to us as the Nicene Creed. At the second 'General Council,' held in 381 at Constantinople, it was found necessary to add further clauses, and the resulting 'Creed' is the one used in our Service of Holy Communion to-day. In somewhat similar fashion there grew up in Western Europe the 'Apostles' Creed,' which is the one used at Morning and Evening Prayer. (What is called the 'Athanasian' Creed is, strictly speaking, not a Creed as the other two are. It is an old Christian hymn, like the 'Te Deum Laudamus.') Realise that these 'Creeds' do not attempt to expound *all* the Christian Faith; they are authoritative statements on necessary points and confine themselves to the main things. In drawing a map one begins with the main features: the rough outlines, mountain ranges, chief rivers and towns; the rest can be filled in as desired. Because a small town is not inserted in the main sketch, it does not follow that it is 'non-existent.' So with the Creeds. They give the great outlines and essential points, but do not profess to explain everything or to insert 'details.'

The 'Creeds' are generally divided into twelve great statements or clauses. In examining them to find their meaning, keep in mind both the Nicene and the Apostles' Creeds. They vary a little in wording, but, needless to say, mean the same thing, and the variations are interesting and instructive.

1. "*I believe in* (one) *God the Father Almighty, Maker*

of Heaven and earth (and of all things visible and invisible)."

This teaches us that *God* is our Maker; that the world, and we are not made (i) by the devil, or (ii) by 'weird beings' and demi-gods, or (iii) by chance. All of these alternatives have been credited with our creation, both in early Christian times and in varying ways throughout history up to the present day. Christianity teaches us that God Himself is the Maker—none other, none less—and of us human beings He is not only maker, but Father, because 'He hath given us of His spirit.'

Then notice too that He is maker of heaven (*i.e.* the spiritual) and earth (*i.e.* the material); the phrase is practically the same as "things visible and invisible." In our day many have the same difficulty that they had in old times. They find it comparatively easy to believe that God is 'Lord of the Invisible,' but stumble at Him being 'Lord of the Visible.' Realise that Christianity teaches that God is Lord of all things and that the things of your daily life are the concern of God as much as the invisible aspirations of your soul and spirit.

2. "*And* (I believe) *in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord.*"

'Jesus' is His human name: that of a real human being, as we are. "Christ" (a Greek word meaning "the anointed one" and the same word as the Hebrew word 'Messiah') we can call His Divine name. His "only" son does not mean that *we* are not sons of God. The word really is our word "unique," meaning His only son *in that particular way*. "Our Lord." Remember that Jesus Christ is not only our Saviour, our Redeemer, but He is 'Lord and Master' of our lives, as He Himself said (St. John, xiii, 13). "My Lord and my God," as Thomas called Him (St. John, xx, 28). The Nicene Creed adds some most important words: "*Begotten*

of His Father before all Worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made." These tremendous words are put in to teach that Jesus Christ was really Divine, and not merely 'like God' and only the first and greatest of all created things. "God *of* God," etc., means "out of." He was "God coming out of God." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. v, 19). "Christ" was never created; He is from all eternity to all eternity—the same yesterday, to-day and for ever (Heb. xiii, 8). He was the one 'by whom all things were made,' and when His Creation—we human beings—went wrong and fell into the power of sin and death, it was He Himself who came and at the cost of His own life brought us back into a place of safety. (See Philippians, ii, 5–11.) If He really had to 'be the way' from us to God the Father, He would have to be "very man and very God"—else He would not reach right across. A bridge must reach to both sides of a river to be a bridge at all. It must go all the way. This part of our Creed tells us that He really was 'God.'

3. (I believe He) "*Who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary*" (and was made man).

This is the "Incarnation" which we annually celebrate on Christmas Day. We now turn to the human nature of Jesus Christ. He was 'born of God' and came into the world of a human mother, just like we do. He did not "suddenly appear," like divine beings often do in legends, but went through our human experiences of babyhood and childhood and manhood, so that He could truly share our life and be truly human. Thereby He consecrated all things human unto Himself. Before He thus came, men had little or no idea that human life and the human body were to be regarded as

something ' holy.' But after Jesus Christ went through our earthly life, wore our human body, and underwent our human experiences—joys and sorrows, difficulties and temptations, sufferings and, finally, death—all these things became ' holy ' to the Christians, because they knew that ' God ' had shared them, known them, blessed them, and that they could become things to lead us ' daily nearer God.'

4. (I believe He) " *Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried ; He descended into Hell.*"

This is the " Crucifixion," which we celebrate annually on Good Friday.

This article is added to teach plainly the fact, and the reality, of the death of Jesus Christ. In the days in which the creed was drawn up, men found it far easier to believe in the ' Incarnation ' (*i.e.* that a Divine Being could become human ; the 3rd article) than in the death of Christ on the Cross, which was " to the Jews a stumbling block (to them it was an accursed death) and to the Greeks (*i.e.* heathen) foolishness " (*i.e.* sheer absurdity), as St. Paul says in 1 Cor. i, 28. Strangely enough in a way, the reverse seems to be the case in modern times. Men now seem to grasp the truth of the ' Atoning Death ' more easily than that of the ' Incarnation ' and ' Resurrection.' The present war has taught many that the redemption of the world from tyranny (whether material or spiritual) can only be through suffering and death, and that, at the awful cost of lives laid down, ' others ' live in peace and safety. The war has many lessons for us, if we will but learn them, and one of the greatest is the light it sheds upon the meaning of the death of Christ to redeem us from the tyranny of sin and death.

But this was a great difficulty to men in ancient days. How could a Divine Being suffer and die ? All sorts

of " explanations " were offered ; *e.g.* The divine part of Him left before the Crucifixion took place : someone else was crucified in His place : He did not really ' die,' but only fainted, and " came to " in the cool of the tomb ! To all of these, the Christian Creed clearly answers in words to prove conclusively that He, and none other, *really* died.

The date is given. " Under Pontius Pilate " is not added to ' brand the memory of the Roman Governor,' but simply to date it as a historical fact. " He suffered." It was not a pretence. He really was ' crucified,' and did not ' faint,' but *died.* His body was actually buried, and His soul and spirit went into the ' spirit world.' " He descended into Hell " does not refer to the place of torment. Unfortunately, we have only one English word to express two Greek and Hebrew ones. The " place of departed spirits " (Hebrew, *Sheol*, Greek, *Hades*) and the " place of torment " (Hebrew, *Gehenna*, Greek, *e.g. Tartarus*) are both called " hell " in English. And we have associated the word ' hell ' as meaning exclusively the latter. But in the original language ' Hades ' is used in this sentence, meaning simply " the place of departed spirits." And what the Creed here means to tell us is the final proof that death took place. Earthly death is the separation of body and soul. So it says—" His body was buried, His soul went into the world of departed spirits " ; He really died !

5. (I believe) " *The third day He rose again from the dead.*" This is the ' Resurrection of Christ ' which we celebrate annually on Easter Day. Again, it is a ' central truth ' of our Faith and one on which the early Christian Church and the New Testament laid the greatest possible stress. With the gift of the Holy Spirit, it was the event that transformed the disciples from being a scared and disappointed knot of frightened peasants and fisher-folk

into a band of men who faced undaunted the bitter hostility of their rulers, the terrors of the Roman Empire, and, under God, founded the greatest Society that the world has ever known. As has been truly said, those who deny it have to find something that happened in those weeks capable of working this tremendous transformation in the lives of these men, *who were not expecting it.*

The ' Resurrection ' not only teaches us that we ' live beyond the grave ' (" Because I live, ye shall live also," said Christ (St. John, xiv, 19), but that life's full story to the Christian is one of victory and triumph over disappointment, difficulty, seeming defeat and even death. One cannot teach its meaning better than in quoting some grand words in the last poem that Robert Browning ever wrote. It teaches us to aim at being, and that we can be,

> " One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,
> Never doubted clouds would break,
> Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
> Held we fall to rise, and baffled, to fight better,
> Sleep to wake ! "

6. (I believe) " *He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty.*"

This is the " Ascension," which we annually celebrate on " Ascension Day," the fifth Thursday (the fortieth day) after Easter. In this article are some great truths and lessons. It is " Jesus Christ " going home to God after His earthly life's work was finished and His victory won. It teaches us, too, that this is the destiny of all faithful souls after our earthly life, for He has ' opened ' the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. We do not ' end up,' or are ' stamped out,' but live in spirit to go ' home to God,' and be ' for ever with the Lord.' It was

not enough to gain the victory : he had, he wanted, to go " home " afterwards. Again, we men out at the Front see its meaning so well ' in the red light of war.' When our soldiers will stand upon the final battlefield of victory, it will not be " all they want." That they will have only when they have ' gone home '—" back to Blighty," as we call it. I remember so well trying to help and cheer one of our brave laddies who was very badly wounded, and I said to him, " Well, old chap, you will be going home to Blighty soon, so cheer up." The brave fellow knew he was badly hit, and he looked straight at me and said, " Well, sir, in any case, it will be ' going home,' won't it ? "—And I blessed him in the name of the Lord.

Then notice the latter part of the article. The " right hand of God " is not, of course, to be taken literally. It is the place of honour, of glory, of power. It is meant to teach us the same lesson as the Incarnation. Some men used to say that if Christ did come and ' touch ' our mortal body, even if He went back again, He could not be quite as exalted as before. This article of the Creed teaches us otherwise. He *is* back in His ancient and eternal power and glory and has " taken the Manhood into God." There He—our great High Priest—ever liveth and maketh intercession for us. And the tremendous truth it teaches us, and the comfort it gives us, is that the God whom we worship, not only cares and loves, but *knows* about our human life. We can, therefore, bring to God in prayer, not only the " aspirations of our souls," but also the things of our daily life. " *In everything* by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving we can make our requests known unto God," because Christ with our human nature has ' ascended ' and is there at the right hand of the Father.

7. " *And* (I believe) *He shall come again with glory to*

judge the quick and the dead: Whose Kingdom shall have no end."

This is the "Second Advent," which we celebrate annually at the Advent season in December. Advent is not only a time of preparation for the commemoration of the First Coming on Christmas Day, but also is a season when we look forward to the Second Coming of Christ 'with glory,' 'at the end of the world.'

Few Christian truths have been more distorted and misunderstood—even neglected—than this one, yet it holds a very prominent place in the New Testament and to the early Church it was a living truth and tremendous inspiration. Unfortunately, it has suffered much from "curious and erratic interpretations" of various passages of the Scriptures, and the result has been, in the eyes of many, to turn one of the greatest spiritual truths of our faith into a mere unintelligible puzzle and curious survival and nothing more. Yet in the truth of the Second Coming lies the crown and glory of our human life. The Christian view of life and of the relations of God and Man is a tremendous and sublime "drama," of which the triumphant result is the Second Coming. We live, as it were, in the 'fourth act' of the drama: in a serial story whose end is not yet.

Christ came into the world to bring it back to God: the world despised, rejected, and finally crucified Him. But that was not the end. At His Ascension, Christ took back to Heaven with Him "a little handful of human dust and laid it on the throne of God. By virtue of it He will come again to claim all the rest." His Second Coming will be with victory, not with rejection: with glory, not with humiliation. The next time He will come to subdue all things unto Himself and to deliver the redeemed kingdom of men unto God, "even the Father, who hath put all things under His feet." This

is the tremendous vision of the Christian Faith. To the early Church it was a living inspiration : the realisation of it enabled the first believers to endure and remain 'faithful unto death,' as they did. Christian belief is that the world moves onward in progress to this goal. Every act of kindness and of love, every deed of right, every temptation resisted and sin overcome, every life, nobly, if humbly, lived is making easier His Coming and preparing the way for that Kingdom which shall have no end.

Live in that way and by that light. I remember writing a letter for a man, who had been brought in on a stretcher, badly wounded in two or three places. When I had put down what he wanted to say, I said, "Well, how shall we end up?" and he looked at me a little earnestly and whispered, "Will you write 'Holding fast till He comes again'"? I did so for him, and thought to myself how fine it was and true. Let us try bravely always to 'hold fast till He comes again.'

8. "*I believe in the Holy Ghost (the Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets.*)"

This states our belief in the Holy Spirit, who was sent to us 'by the Son from the Father' on the first Christian Pentecost, or Whit Sunday, as we now call it, when we annually celebrate His Coming. The original Nicene Creed (325 A.D.) ended at the words 'Holy Ghost,' and all that follows was added at the Council of Constantinople in 381 A.D., when the Christian Church found it necessary to state that the Holy Ghost was Divine, just as at the previous Council it had done with regard to Jesus Christ.

That we worship Father, Son and Holy Ghost as 'one God' is the Faith of Christendom, which we

annually observe on Trinity Sunday. The word 'Ghost' is simply an old Anglo-Saxon word meaning the same as Spirit. "The Spirit is the Life." And it is of the Spirit that God has given us, whereby we are His children and He our Father. Men, unfortunately, to-day often regard the Holy Spirit as a 'vague influence' and little else. But "He" is the Lord and Giver of Life—and Jesus Christ meant that when 'He' came, He was to be to us as much a living reality and Presence as He Himself was to His Apostles.

9. (I believe in) *The Holy Catholic Church.*

Our human kingdoms are organised and are 'visible societies'; the same is true of the Divine Kingdom. A "Visible Society" means one that has a definite organisation and 'rules,' not simply one whose only bond of union is a common, "invisible" feeling or experience, necessary though that is. There is a definite visible Society whose work is to spread the knowledge of the Redemption to all mankind. It is called "the Church." It is 'Holy' because it belongs to God, and deals with the things of God. "Catholic" simply means "Universal." The Society of Christ is for all people and for all ages. It is not simply for one 'race' as the Jews' religion was, and as people who "don't believe in foreign missions" to-day apparently think it is. They forget that Christianity was not 'a white man's religion,' or Western, or European, to begin with, and that 'we' are the result of foreign missions. The Nicene Creed adds "Apostolic," because, under God, the Society was organised by the Apostles, and it adds "I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins"—giving thereby the *visible* means of admittance into the Society. It also adds "one" because ideally the Church of God—the Father of all men—can only be 'one,' in spite of our human divisions.

10. (I believe in) " *The Communion of Saints.*"

In a way this is the *invisible* side of the Society of God, or the Divine Kingdom ; the counterpart of the Holy Catholic Church. " Saints " is the Latin ' sancti,' holy or sanctified. It includes all believers in Jesus Christ, all followers of God, all those who live by the Spirit. We commemorate them annually on All Saints' Day, November 1.

" Communion " means intercourse or fellowship. This wonderful and blessed truth teaches us that Christians are not ' isolated individuals,' mechanically joined one to another because we happen to be in the same Society. We are not only in Communion with God, but with one another. We are all " one in Christ Jesus " (Gal. iii, 28). We are members, living parts, of one another, as well as of Christ. And as the Church is not bounded by the grave, but extends each side of it, for the barrier of ' death ' shall not prevail against it (St. Matt. xvi, 18), so the Communion of Saints is one greater than earthly life. The ' great tragedy ' of our imperfect life is that at present the ' Holy Catholic Church ' and the ' Communion of Saints ' do not coincide as ideally as they should. For the Visible Divine Kingdom is not only itself split up into many different ' sections ' and in all sorts of ways, but many who outwardly and visibly belong to it cannot be said to be more than nominal members. Again, many earnest devout souls, in all ages and places, can truly be said to belong invisibly to the Fellowship of God and in the ' Communion of Saints,' yet who have never felt their way to joining the Visible Society ; perhaps never have had the opportunity. The Christian ideal looks forward to the day when these two shall ' coincide,' and the outward Church and the inward Communion shall be the common heritage of all.

11. (I believe in) *The Forgiveness of Sins.*

This is the object of the Crucifixion of Christ. He came to 'save us from our sins.' The "Incarnation" and the life of Christ were to teach us that Life was holy and blessed by God: the "Atonement" and the Death of Christ made this possible by blotting out the past and giving us a 'new start.' It was our Re-Creation.

Men have ever striven in all kinds of ways to rid their consciences of guilt. The Christian solution is "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" "and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John, i, 9, 7). To-day, as in the old times when the Creeds were drawn up, men often find it hard to believe in the reality of *sin* to begin with, and in the possibility and reality of *forgiveness* in the second stage. Yet this is the meaning of the Cross of Christ. It is a 'Gospel of forgiveness' and of 'Redemption,' and in it lies the great 'motive power' of Christian living. "Greatly forgiven, let us greatly serve." "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. iv, 32).

12. (I believe in) *The Resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.*

This teaches us the 'survival of personality after Death.' The 'body' is used here in that sense. We are not utterly stamped out on the one side, nor, on the other, are we merely absorbed into a world of spirit like snowflakes falling into an ocean. We shall know, and shall be known; we shall love and shall be loved (1 Cor. xiii, 12). "When the silver cord is loosed, and the golden bowl is broken" (Eccles. xii, 6, 7) our spirits return unto God who gave them, and once the limitations of our human body are removed, our freed spirits and

souls go home to be 'for ever with the Lord,' through Jesus Christ our Saviour. In His service is the perfection of freedom, and in His presence is the fulness of joy (Psalms, xvi, 11; xvii, 15).

This is the Christian Creed into which we were baptised. This is what we promise to believe when God takes us for 'His Children' in our Baptism. Surely when thus we think of these things, we will ever, by His Grace, so strive to live that we may be His Faithful soldiers and Servants unto our life's end that we too may enter in "through the gates into the City" and join the throng of the redeemed around the throne of God.

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

(Used at Morning and Evening Prayer.)

I BELIEVE in (1) God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:

(2) And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, (3) who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, (4) suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; (5) the third day he rose again from the dead, (6) He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; (7) from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

(8) I believe in the Holy Ghost; (9) the holy Catholick Church; (10) the Communion of Saints; (11) the Forgiveness of sins; (12) the Resurrection of the body; and the Life everlasting. Amen.

THE NICENE CREED.

(Used at Holy Communion Service.)

I BELIEVE (1) in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible:

(2) And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made: (3) Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man, (4) And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, (5) And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, (6) And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father. (7) And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the

dead: Whose kingdom shall have no end.

(8) And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and giver of life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Porphets. (9) And I believe one Catholick and Apostolick Church. (11) I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, (12) And I look for the Resurrection of the dead, And the life of the world to come. Amen.

From the Catechism:

Question. What dost thou chiefly learn in these Articles of thy Belief?

Answer. First, I learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made me, and all the world.

Secondly, in God the Son, who hath redeemed me, and all mankind.

Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me, and all the elect people of God.

CHAPTER VI

THE THIRD DOUBLE PROMISE

In this last Baptismal Promise God makes us "an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven," and we, on our side, undertake to "obey God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of our life."

In God's promise to us to be "inheritors of the kingdom of heaven," there is a *present* sense, which also runs into a *future* one. The 'kingdom of heaven' is, of course, what we call our 'Divine Kingdom.' It exists here and now on earth, but also we include and look forward to its glorified existence in eternity in heaven, when the limitations and imperfections of our present life will have disappeared. So the word "inheritor" (meaning sharer or partaker) has similarly a twofold sense. It does 'look forward' to the time when we shall be 'inheritors of the glory of the Saints in light' (Col. i, 12): *i.e.*, partakers of the glorified kingdom, but also it means that we become sharers and partakers in the life of the Divine Kingdom here and now on earth. This Divine Kingdom really and visibly exists now, although brokenly and imperfectly, and just as, in regard to our 'minds and bodies,' we are subjects of an existing earthly kingdom, so, in respect to our spirits, we are subjects of the Divine Kingdom of God.

This Baptismal Promise assures us of our 'Divine

citizenship.' We are not merely slaves and subjects, but citizens, sharers and partakers in the Kingdom. We are given its 'protection,' and in return it demands our obedience to its laws. We can well draw a comparison here between our human and divine Kingdoms. Most of us have probably been born in the British Empire and shortly after our birth were "registered" as its subjects. Even when quite helpless and unknowing, we were thus brought under its care and protection, and naturally are expected to grow up and observe its laws. In our Divine Kingdom the same truth holds good. We are baptised as our birthright and are at once admitted as little subjects—inheritors—of the Kingdom. We are brought under its protection and are bound to obey its laws.

Before we look at our part of this third promise and see what are the laws, let us look a little more closely at the Divine Kingdom of which we are subjects. As we have shown in the previous chapter, the Kingdom of God, or the Church of Christ, is at once a Visible Society and an Invisible one: set forth as the 'Holy Catholic Church' and 'The Communion of Saints.' One day—in eternity—we pray that they will be one.

Here it is of the definite *Visible* Society, or Kingdom, or Church that we write. We can most helpfully describe it under various heads, with the idea of the framework of a Society in mind.

1. *A Society must have a Head.* *The Head* of the Society is Jesus Christ. It belongs to Him and the Society exists for Him, and for all men to whom it is sent.

2. *A Society must have an Object.* *The Object* is given to it by Jesus Christ Himself. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (St. Mark, xvi, 15). "Go ye therefore and teach all

nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (St. Matt. xxviii, 19–20.) Here we can see two successive stages. The first is a "Missionary" one: to spread the faith of Christ to all people. Here realise that to God there is no such thing as 'foreign Missions'; all are equally His children. The second is to "organise the Society" so that in it new born souls can live in touch with God and find it possible to do His will and "observe the commanded things." The great danger of this Society—as of all others—is that it tends to *live for itself*, and not for its object. So often 'the Church' has, both to itself and to others, given the idea that it does this, and caring more for itself than for its object, loses touch both with God, who sent it, and mankind to whom it is sent. Always try to remember that the Church is not merely an end in itself, a "blind alley," but is a "Way," a great high road leading at one end to God and the other to men, along which all can travel and find strength and sustenance on the journey. Keep both ends open! It is the King's Highway: and He can always be found on it.

3. *A Society must have its rules, regulations, standards.* These are the Bible and the Creeds, which latter are a convenient, short form of summary of the main articles of Christian belief.

4. *A Society must have its "Officers."* As in the Military and Naval Services, they are 'Commissioned' and 'Non-commissioned.' The Commissioned Officers are the three orders (or ranks) of Bishops, Priests and Deacons: the regular clergy, as we call them, who have been 'ordained' to the ministry of the Church of Christ. The 'Non-commissioned' include all 'lay workers' of whatever kind they be.

Try not to fall into the too common error of exalting the former at the expense of the latter! They differ in "function," *i.e.*, the kind of work that they do, but "all service is the same with God." In one of his poems Kipling says, "The backbone of the Army is the non-commissioned man." It is also true of the Society of Christ. The Church has nearly always been in a healthy condition when 'lay work' has flourished. Those best fitted to be clergy are those who are perfectly ready to work 'non-commissioned' if the road to Holy Orders does not open.

5. *A Society must have its means of admission. This is Holy Baptism.* As we have said at the beginning, this makes us members of the Church of God. There is a second stage. As in other societies, often a man becomes a probationary member, and afterwards a full member, so in this one. Our Baptism makes us *members*, but it is our 'Confirmation' that admits us to all its privileges. Confirmation is, as it were, our spiritual "coming of age."

6. *A Society must have its badge of membership*, its *means of recognition*, and of *intercourse* with each other, as well as with its Head. This is *Holy Communion.* Intertwined with it is *Prayer:* especially in its general sense —or 'corporate capacity,' as seen in *Public Worship.*

7. These are the outward, visible things—the framework of the Society. All these things have their origin in the days of the Apostles, and as such we keep and observe them, though inevitably changes have occurred and will take place from time to time. But always remember that the 'life of any Society' depends upon its 'spirit' and its power. Apart from this, it is simply dead mechanism. So, although here we talk of the 'visible things,' yet ever bear in mind *the greatest gift that Jesus Christ gave to His Society: the Holy Spirit,*

whom He sent on the first Whit Sunday. This made 'His Society' a living thing, and not a mere 'organisation.' Keep loyally to 'the outward things' of your Society, but remember that 'only as you catch His Spirit' do you really enter into their full meaning and do they become the 'living things' and guides to God and Christ that they are intended to be.

As we are writing here about the Divine Society in its Visible form, we should not close this chapter without explaining what we mean by belonging to the Church of England and why we do so.

As we have already said, ideally, of course, the 'Society of God,' the 'Holy Catholic Church' must be 'one,' but actually, through our human imperfections, it is divided into several parts: sometimes on points of doctrine, sometimes on those of organisation.

We belong to the 'Church of England' because we believe that it is the purest, truest form of the Visible Kingdom of God, keeping to the two great principles of *Biblical Truth* and *Apostolic Order*. We are not Roman Catholics, because they have forsaken the former: we are not Nonconformists, because they have forsaken the latter. Yet, in keeping loyally to our 'Church of England,' do not despise those who sincerely are outside it. We do not claim an *exclusive* possession of the Holy Spirit, who speaks in divers ways to men, even as "Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of Harvest" (Joshua, iii, 15).

We can, perhaps, add usefully one further paragraph about a word that is often wrongly and unfairly derided by many at the present day, and that is—Protestant. It came into existence in the days of the Reformation to assert our return to the Apostolic ways and truths from which the *Roman* Catholic had departed. The word really is historical more than theological. But do not

think that it stands only for opposition to the Roman Catholic faith. It is not "merely negative," but stands for the greatest *positive* truth of our religion; the "all sufficiency" of Jesus Christ. He is the 'one hope of our human race,' and is finally "sufficient" for *all men*, for *all times*, for *all places*, for *all circumstances*. When we say the Church of England is Protestant, this is what is meant. It is really Catholic and Apostolic, by descent, and in faith and doctrine. The Reformation did not break our "continuity," but it did assert, as against the Roman Catholic unreformed Church, the final truth of the all-sufficiency of the World's Redeemer for all needs of all men; to Him all can go, directly and immediately, and *He* is the Way unto the Father. The Church is His Society and the clergy are His commissioned servants, but He is Lord and Master. No reasonable, thoughtful man would wish, or need in normal life to forsake the ancient ways, if in and through them, the appeal of the soul to God is immediate and direct through Jesus Christ, by whom alone we obtain "remission of sins and entry into the Kingdom of Heaven." This is the position of the Church of England, which holds both to the ancient ways and also to immediacy of access unto God through Jesus Christ. This we believe is the true Catholic faith, which historically it has been necessary to assert strongly against the Roman Catholic views. Hence, as Archbishop Benson once said in a celebrated sentence, "The Church of England is Catholic, Apostolic, Reformed and Protestant."

CHAPTER VII

THE THIRD DOUBLE PROMISE

(*b*) *The Vow of Obedience*

If God thus receives us as 'inheritors of His Kingdom' in our Baptism, we, for our part, promise to keep His Laws. This obligation naturally follows. Citizens of any country enjoy its protection on the one hand, and on the other are bound to keep its laws. In a 'good' State, the laws are for the protection of them that do well: they are a terror only to the evil doer (Rom. xiii, 3). So do not regard these laws as evil things! They are for your guidance and help. 'Laws' are in the natural world; they are in the spiritual world as well: for God is Lord and Maker of both. In the Catechism you find God's laws put down under the name of the Ten Commandments. These Commandments are always read at the beginning of the Holy Communion Service as the standards of God's requirements from His subjects. They were the foundation of the Covenant between God and His Chosen People, as recorded in the Old Testament. They were not 'done away with' by Jesus Christ, but rather expanded and intensified. He bade us keep them if we would enter into Life Eternal (St. Matt. xix, 17). They cover more ground than seems to be the case at first sight. Read Jesus Christ's

interpretation of some of them in the Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. v, 17), and see how He comments on them. Jesus Christ goes further. Very greatly the old Commandments were *negative*, telling us what we must *not* do. The Master of Life sums them up and makes them positive. It is not enough to avoid doing, and being evil; we must actively do and be good. On another occasion He said the great Commandment was to love God with all our heart and mind, soul and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves: and on these two hung all the Law and the Prophets (St. Matt. xxii, 34–40). So when you hear the Ten Commandments read, receive them and try to keep them in the spirit and according to the teaching of Jesus Christ.

1. *The First Commandment* bids us worship and have no other God but the One. It forbade the Israelites to worship the gods of the heathen in any shape or form. We do not feel drawn to worship other deities in that sense, but—What is a God? From the living, practical point of view a 'god' is something in your life which is stronger than you are; which controls and commands you instead of *vice versa*. This Commandment bids us let God be the strongest power in our lives, and that our besetting sins and desire should *not* have dominion over us (see Isaiah, xxvi, 13).

2. *The Second Commandment* warns us not against false gods, but against false worship. We may not feel particularly inclined to make 'graven images' even as a "help to worship," as some do, but formal, unmeaning repetition of prayers and services is really making a graven image. It is offering a dead thing, or likeness, unto God, whereas Christ bade us remember: "God is spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (St. John, iv, 24).

One word can usefully be added upon the "sins of the

fathers," because many people find in this a great stumbling block and weapon against the justice and righteousness of God. First of all, notice that though the effects of sin go to three or four generations, those of good go to 'thousands'; and then, though the *effect* goes on, the *guilt* is confined to the one: "the soul that sinneth, *it* shall die" (Ezekiel, xviii, 4). But there is something else to see: it sounds unjust on the face of it, but realise what it means. *It is a condition of the life that we live.* It really means to tell us that "no man liveth to himself." To see its true meaning better, imagine what would be the condition of human life, were this grim statement not true. We would then be powerless to affect others for evil, but also *we would be powerless to affect them for good.* Human life would become like that of "pebbles on the beach"; it would really cease to be. The law is double-edged. Evil works itself out in time, but goodness goes on for ever. If you think about it in this way, your difficulties will in great part disappear.

3. *The Third Commandment* is not only a Commandment against swearing and bad language, but it teaches us reverence for God's name, and for everything on which God's name rests. Remember that great souls are always reverent. The Commandment bids us be "reverent" not only in Church, and in those holy things, but in our behaviour towards all things and creatures, for He made them, and towards our bodies, for they are His Temples.

4. *The Fourth Commandment* bids us remember that all our time is God's: not only the day in which He bids us to 'rest,' but also the six days in which He bids us to labour. As with all the Commandments, do not think that these are merely "religious" orders, but realise that they are based on the true conditions and necessities of *human life,* which of course *is* the gift of God.

The Jewish Sabbath has become the Christian Sunday, or Lord's Day. Realise that it is a *holy* day, and everything you do thereon must be guided by that thought. The 'Rest' is given in order that you may *worship*. This is your first duty to God on His weekly Holy Day. *Always* remember that your Sunday 'rest' is not rightly spent unless it finds you, at least once, worshipping God in His Holy House of Prayer. On this day, you bring to Him your sacrifice of praise and prayer, and your weekly offering, as a token that "all that we have is Thine, and of Thine own have we given Thee."

5. *The Fifth Commandment* is the first of those that come under the head of our "Duty towards our Neighbour," that is, the world in which we live: as the first four compose our "Duty towards God." This Commandment teaches us obedience and respect to lawful human authority, which is the shadow of the Divine. It involves not only obedience to parents, but also to those in authority over us. Do not think it "unmanly" thus to render obedience. Only those who know how to obey are fit to rule. 'Discipline' is the test of any army. Sometimes it is lamentably true that those to whom this obedience is due are pitifully unworthy of it. There are 'bad' parents and masters, bad leaders in Church and State. But even if you cannot reverence the actual, always reverence the *ideal*, and pray that when *you* are in a position of authority, as parent or master, you may be worthy of it. The "unworthy" will have to answer to God for it; meanwhile, by your 'Christian humility' you may lead them to better things. "A little child shall lead them" is true of many parents who have been brought to God by the example of their own children.

6. *The Sixth Commandment* teaches us Love. Again, read how Jesus Christ comments on this. You must

not 'murder the body,' and you must not murder the soul! "Soul murder" is perhaps far more common than bodily murder! The latter is seen by men, the former by God. Always try to remember this. There is that young brother, or sister, or friend, or associate in work, whose 'soul' is just growing into active life. If your 'bad' example kills it, what will you have to say? Always try so to live that you can be conscious that other souls are better, not worse; live, not die, for your having been in contact with them.

7. *The Seventh Commandment* teaches us self-control and purity. It enforces the truth of what has been said before, that if you want to grow up happily and truly and well, and in accordance with the will of God, you must 'keep the laws' of your *three* kingdoms. This tells us that we must keep the body's laws, and also that your body must be your servant and not your master. Do not think that the body is essentially bad and evil, for God made it as He made the rest of you, and all Creation; but it becomes 'bad'—what St. Paul called "the flesh"—when it rules your soul, instead of your spirit doing so, which God intends.

Here let us add some very important things that you should read carefully about your body and its laws. If your parents have done their duty, and been thoughtful and wise and kind to you, they will have told you bit by bit about these things, so that you will not learn them anyhow, and in wrong, impure ways, and perhaps suffer much in consequence. You are now growing up and becoming "aware of yourself," and beginning to know what it is to be a man or a woman. The great powers of bodily life are also growing, and you "instinctively" begin to know it. Now, first of all, *DON'T* be frightened at these bodily changes and physical developments taking place in yourself, or think that you are

committing dreadful sins because you can't help being conscious of them. If you are "worried" about yourself, don't be ashamed to confide in mother or father (really, as said, they ought to talk to you about them), or in someone that you can really trust. Whatever you do, *DON'T* answer "medical advertisements," or "quack professors." If need be, go to a proper doctor; he will gladly give you advice and is quite "used" to it.

Take proper care of your body; give it good, regular food and exercise, and regular habits. "Sign the Pledge." It is a very wise thing to do and easy for you now. When you never have had "strong drink" you never want it, and it is a very expensive habit. Besides, "strong drink" is the best possible ally for the other bodily passions that you must keep under the control of your spirit, and more and more, the best doctors insist that alcohol is a medicine and a drug, not a "drink." Then "keep straight." Live pure. Your "sexual passions," as they are called, are growing as you grow. Here probably will be your greatest battle between your spirit and body. *Don't believe the "devil's doctrine" that a boy or girl can't keep straight.* You *can.* It is a battle, often this is *the* battle of life, at any rate, at this time of your life. It is just here where your religion comes in to help. How it does will be seen later on in this book.

Keep straight for three reasons. *First, for your own sake.* You will hear of "horrible diseases" that are widespread in the land. Don't be scared about them unnecessarily, but remember that, broadly speaking, you can catch them only from people that already have them, and if you "keep yourself to yourself" you run no risk. Then, if you want to grow up healthy and strong and efficient, don't 'tamper' with your powers of

life ; it is like draining a tree of its life-maintaining sap.

Secondly, keep straight for the sake of the boy or girl that is growing up somewhere else, and whom one day you will marry, and with whom you will start your own little home and family. There is no greater joy for you than one day to be happily married to the one you really love. Keep yourself ' pure and undefiled ' for his sake or for her sake. Naturally you expect it of ' the other one ' ; therefore see that you offer it yourself. When you are ' tempted ' keep this in mind, and ' keep straight ' for ' his,' for ' her ' sake. (Read 1 Thess. iv, 1–8 ; 1 Cor. vi, 15–20 ; Romans, vi, 12–23.)

Thirdly, keep straight for Christ's sake. It is the will of God. The New Testament is full of this. " Keep thyself pure." " Flee fornication." " Fornication " is evil doing, in this way, before marriage, as " Adultery " is evil doing after marriage. *Both* are against the will and Commandments of God.*

8. *The Eighth Commandment* teaches us Honesty. People sometimes try to cover all sorts of " shady practices " with the excuse that one must live. To quote from a wise old Greek—" it is not necessary to live : it is necessary to live *well*." The same type of man that tells you ' A man can't keep straight ' will also tell you that ' A man can't make his business pay on Christian lines.' What such a man means is that " he " can't, and perhaps has not tried. But it does not follow that others cannot, who really try, and with the help of

* In this connection I would like to recommend to parents an excellent little book by a doctor now serving in France, and just published : " What our Children should know, and how to tell them," by Capt. I. Flack, R.A.M.C.(T.). Published by Oliphants, Ltd., at 4*s.* 6*d.*

God. Of course it is a battle, and one is often a battle as much as the other, but both can be fought and won. Another variation of the same thing is that a nation cannot be ruled by Christian principles. Confessedly the so-called Christian nations are not thus ruled, and this war is the result! Always try in your life to remember and act on it, that right is right, and that some things are "without money and without price." Then be honest in *little* things; don't spend money unnecessarily on yourself when you are in debt to other people. And don't run into debt, or buy things you cannot pay for.

The Ninth Commandment teaches us Truthfulness. It is closely allied to the previous one. Be honest in word as well as in deed; and in the spirit, as well as in the letter. A Christian should always be honourable: one whose deeds are as true as his word. "He reverenced his word, as he reverenced His God" was said of a great English soldier. As a nation, we feel rightly proud that we 'kept our word' to Belgium, even at the price of war. One may gain the whole world (*i.e.* all one desires) and lose our own soul, our honour, in doing so.

The Tenth Commandment teaches us Contentment. We so often break this one and are always envying others, and thinking they are so much better off than we are. The two previous Commandments teach honesty and uprightness in deed and word; this one may be said to teach the same things *in thought*. Few Commandments are broken more often than this one. Envy is one of the seven deadly sins: it was for Envy that the high priests gave over Jesus Christ to death (St. Matt. xxvii, 18). You must not think that this Commandment forbids you trying to 'get on' in life, and to improve your position, for, on the contrary, whatever talents

God has given you He expects you to use and develop. But you must not despise or neglect the gifts you have, and spend your soul and energies in coveting those that you have not, and in envying those in possession of them. In this connection a word may usefully be added about a part of the Catechism that is often misunderstood and *misquoted*. You will find it at the end of your "*Duty to my Neighbour*." It bids you do your "duty in that state of life unto which it *shall please* God to call me."

This does not mean you must always "stick where you are, and be thankful." God calls you to use the faculties He has given you—honestly in thought and deed and word, to the utmost of your ability. But progress is the law of life, and God may, will, call you to greater work and service—and every *lawful* opportunity of advancement is a call from God to the Christian. Take it as such, and use it for Him when it comes, but in the meantime do your present duty 'without coveting,' and do that unto God.

These are the Commandments, the great moral standards of God's Kingdom, which He expects all His citizens to keep and observe. You can, perhaps, now see that they cover much more ground than appears at first sight, and in them is the secret of good and true and happy and useful living. We close this chapter with one final thought. Try always to 'keep these Commandments,' not because it 'pays' (although it does finally), or because you are *afraid* of breaking them (although in the end the 'price' has to be paid for doing so), but because you love God, your Father, who gave them to you to guide you safely through life. Jesus Christ said, "If ye love Me, keep My Commandments." Try so to love God that you would *hate* to feel you deliberately broke His laws. We always try

to please those we love, and in pleasing them we find our own reward and greatest happiness.

My God, I love Thee, not because
I hope for heaven thereby:
Nor yet because, who love Thee not
Are lost eternally.

THE CATECHISM.

Question.

You said, that your Godfathers and Godmothers did promise for you, that you should keep God's Commandments. Tell me how many there be?

Answer. Ten.

Question. Which be they?

Answer.

THE same which God spake in the twentieth Chapter of Exodus, saying, I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

I. Thou shalt have none other gods but me.

II. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shew mercy unto thousands in them that love me, and keep my commandments.

III. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain.

IV. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it.

V. Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI. Thou shalt do no murder.

VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII. Thou shalt not steal.

IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

Question.

What dost thou chiefly learn by these Commandments ?

Answer. I learn two things : my duty towards God, and my duty towards my Neighbour.

Question. What is thy duty towards God ?

Answer. My duty towards God, is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength ; to worship him, to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy Name and his Word, and to serve him truly all the days of my life.

Question. What is thy duty towards thy Neighbour ?

Answer. My duty towards my Neighbour, is to love him as myself, and to do to all men, as I would they should do unto me : To love, honour, and succour my father and mother : To honour and obey the King, and all that are put in authority under him : To submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters : To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters : To hurt no body, by word nor deed : To be true and just in all my dealing : To bear no malice nor hatred in my heart : To keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue from evil-speaking, lying, and slandering : To keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity : Not to covet nor desire other men's goods ; but to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life, unto which it shall please God to call me.

Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,

Master, which is the great commandment in the law ?

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.—(St. Matt. xxii, 35–40.)

CHAPTER VIII

WHAT CONFIRMATION IS

1. *The Ratification*

WHEN you were reading ' history ' at school, you may often have come across the phrase : " The Ratification of the Treaty was signed," or " Peace was declared, the Treaty signed, and in due course it was ratified by the contesting Powers." Now a " Ratification " is not a new *Treaty*. It is simply a little document signed by the parties concerned, stating that the Treaty in question, as arranged and agreed upon, was confirmed and would be carried out in good faith.

We have hitherto been thinking about our Agreement, or Treaty of Life made with God when we came into the world. This ' Treaty ' was made at our Baptism, with its three double promises. When an agreement is made between two people it is often stamped in order to give it a more solemn character. When we were Baptised, we were signed on the forehead with the sign of the Cross. This is not only Christ's ' mark,' put upon us, just as a shepherd marks his sheep, but also it is the ' stamp upon the agreement.' " We do sign him (her) with the sign of the Cross in token that hereafter he (she) shall not be ashamed " to carry out the conditions of the Treaty.

As we have already said, if you look at the Service of

Baptism in your Prayer-book you will see that it does not end "properly" with the Grace or Benediction. The officiating minister gives some solemn advice to the Godparents about bringing up and teaching the child in the Christian Faith and Life, and finally says, 'when this has been done, you are to bring him (her) to the Bishop to be confirmed.' There the Service abruptly closes for the time, just like a serial story does, with "To be continued in our next" written underneath. If you now turn to the Confirmation Service, you will see that it starts just as abruptly as the Baptismal one ends, and it takes up the 'service' just where it had been broken off. *The Baptismal and Confirmation Services are really ONE, though divided into two parts by an interval of some years.*

Your Confirmation is the 'completion,' the Ratification of your Baptism. Really the two are all one Service. In the 'Preface' to the Confirmation Service, and in the Bishop's Question, you see that you are going to "ratify" your Baptism in just the same way as a treaty is ratified. The Treaty of Life is made for you at the beginning of your Life, because all the time you have to *live*, as you have to eat and drink, even if you do not '*understand*' about it, any more than you do about the laws of eating and drinking. But when you come to the 'years of discretion,' and of independent life, then you have the opportunity of "ratifying," renewing your Treaty of Life with God, of your own accord, and with your own lips and heart. You do not make a new Treaty; you 'ratify' the old one, and say that you will try to keep it in good faith. God confirms His Promises to you; you confirm your Promises to God. This is the first thing that your Confirmation is. There are two others, to which we will come in due course.

We will add one more point before we conclude this part. Remember that "Baptism and Confirmation" do not bind you to things that otherwise you could avoid, and fasten obligations and duties on you that do not really exist. Whether you are baptised and confirmed or not, whether you are a Christian or not, *you live!* And *Life* brings with it all these obligations, work and duties, troubles and temptations, choices and refusals. These things you have to face, simply because you live. Your Christian religion comes in to help you; to guide you through all the perplexities of life, and to give you inspiration and encouragement and a knowledge of the right road to take, truths to believe and things to do.

Do not think, therefore, that you can avoid these things through not being Baptised and Confirmed. Realise rather that they are your greatest helps and guides, as you undertake the responsibilities of making your way through the world in which you live, to the God from whom your spirit came.

END OF PART I.

PART II

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SOLUTION

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM OF THE PAST

If this be the true state of things: that our Life is a great Treaty, and our continuance of Life depends on the faithful carrying out of our part of the Agreement, one fact begins to appear very plainly. Any honest, ordinary reflection for a moment will convince us that we certainly have not kept our part of the Treaty. We have not always given up what is wrong, believed what is true, done what is right. In fact, if we are candid with ourselves, we have probably broken our treaty more often than we have kept it; and even if we have perhaps kept one part of it, we have broken others, and so anyhow, as it stands, we have forfeited our claims under it. Moreover, another fact stands out just as plainly as this one. Even if, 'somehow or other,' the past could be put right, and we were given the chance to start afresh from to-day, is it not true to say that we are no more likely faithfully to fulfil our obligations in the future than we have done in the past?

So, granted that what has hitherto been said is true, if the treaty is to be carried out in the letter, we can neither enter into the 'future' kingdom of God, nor rightly remain in the present one. We have forfeited our right to our position.

Perhaps you will begin to see that all that we have hitherto written about Life and its Problem is really what the Bible—the Old Testament—means to tell us. If man is to live in communion with God, in "the Garden of Eden," he must keep his part of the Treaty and the laws of the three Kingdoms. But man did not do so. He chose to please himself and do what he liked himself, and what was right in his own eyes, irrespective of God. Consequently, as man would not live in agreement with God, he was left to himself. When he lost touch with God—"outside the garden"—he began to find that he was not 'alone,' but that all sorts of evil things and powers were there, which came into his life and soul. Then, as often happens with us when we quarrel with a friend, he began to wish to get back again into communion with God. God wished it as well, but now in between them were all these 'other things,' and man was in their power, and could not break free. Continually, however, we find that the two—God and man—were trying to find each other. God was looking for man, as man was looking for God. This is 'the key' to the whole of the Old Testament. Always have it in mind, as you read it, and then its meaning will be clearer to you. The whole religious system of the Israelites is based upon a consciousness of the 'Treaty of Life,' of the fact that 'we' have broken it, and that something is necessary in order to let us get into communion again with God. Human history is full of attempted solutions of the Problem. These attempts are the religions of the world. Man has generally thought he must *do* something, *give* something, or *suffer* something, and he has often tried them all. This is the meaning of the great words of the prophet Micah when he writes: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before Him with

burnt offerings, with calves of a year old ? (i.e. *shall I do something ?*) Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil ? (i.e. *shall I give something ?*). Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul ? " (i.e. *shall I suffer something ?*) (Micah, vi, 6–7).

But none of these things supplies the answer. The prophet sees that we have to come back to the only thing—and that is to " keep the Treaty." He goes on in the next verse to say : " He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God ? " So we are just back where we were before : for we *don't* do these things. We neither have kept our treaty in the past, nor are we likely to keep it in the future. Thus the Old Testament ends, as it were, with the Problem still unsolved. It is at this point that the New Testament comes in, and Christianity, in its essential character, begins to meet us, and provides a solution.

CHAPTER II

THE MASTER OF LIFE

THE New Testament is the story of the Life and Death of Jesus Christ, of His meaning to the human race, and of the steps taken, and methods adopted, whereby this could be transmitted to all succeeding generations of men. Christianity is the religion of Jesus Christ, and it finds in Him the solution of the Problem of Life, both as regards the Past and the Future.

He came with a twofold purpose : to " Live the Life " and to " Die the Death." In Him God and Man meet. In the stately words of the old Christian hymn, called the Athanasian Creed, He is " Perfect God, and Perfect Man, of a reasonable soul, and human flesh subsisting." In the great sentence of Athanasius himself, God " became human that we might become Divine." As recorded by St. John, Jesus said, " I am the Way, the Truth and the Life : no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." (St. John, xiv, 6). He came into the world and started as a helpless baby even as we do, and went through all our human life to the very end. He lived our human life, as it *should* be lived, in unbroken communion with God, and doing His will in spite of every pain and difficulty that it implied. Finally it meant death, yet He never faltered, but went

open-eyed to the Cross. Human life was so fast bound in sin, that really to live it inevitably meant the snapping of the communion with God. Yet He again went through it, and the world's bitterest cry came from the Christ, losing touch with God upon the Cross—dying of a broken heart (St. Matt. xxvii, 46). However, before He died He felt the Father's presence again, and He passed away in His Father's arms (St. Luke, xxiii, 46). For us too often the losing touch with God is so little, for we live "so far away"; but it was that which killed Him. He taught us that Life—Real, Eternal Life *is* Communion with God, who *is* Life and Light and Love.

But it was not enough simply to "live the Life." Being Divine, He could rise again from the Death which is the inevitable end of all human life apart from God. Merely to 'show us the life,' and nothing more, would be tantalising cruelty. It would be like an international athlete exhibiting his strength before a cripple or an invalid, and bidding him see what 'life' is; or like keeping a man perpetually in prison with a vision of the free and open country beyond his prison bars.

So He came to "die the Death" as well. However difficult and impossible it is to understand all *fully*, we can see enough to understand sufficiently. In the word of the old Athanasian hymn above mentioned, God is "incomprehensible" (*i.e.* not fully 'understandable'): but He is not inapprehensible (*i.e.* out of touch). *Life*, and we are dealing with Life, means 'heart' and 'will,' as well as brain and mind, and "the heart hath reasons of its own, that the mind can never know."

Before the Great War broke out, men often used to ask, sometimes lightly, sometimes earnestly—How *can* one man save another? How can Christ dying on the

Cross, save *me?* The War has taught us thus much. In face of the terrible fact that hundreds, thousands, hundreds of thousands of our best and bravest and dearest *have* died to keep us 'at home' *safe* and *free*, the old question before the War is asked no longer. We have had our answer. "He saved others, Himself He cannot save," was said of Christ on the Cross. In his little human way it can be said of every one of our boys who lie buried behind the trenches and in the sea. I can really, literally, say that it is true that this thought comes to me every time that I stand at the open grave of one of our men, when at the Front I commit his body to 'Mother Earth,' and commend his soul to our Father God. And the great solemn words of St. Paul continually come to my mind, "He died for all, that they who live should not live henceforth unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them—and rose again" (2 Cor. v, 15).

Speaking thus for myself ("and yet not I, but the Lord"), this is the key that opens the door. Life is Redemption: Redemption through Sacrifice, through Love. Jesus Christ is the *Master* of these things: the Master of Life.

He had to do more than *show* us and live for us, the Life Divine. There was something in the way, fastened on our very soul, that had to be killed at its root, taken out of the way, before we could be 'free' to live the Life, or be "clean" in the sight of God. "Jesus Christ did for us, what we could not do for ourselves," and took up the Problem where the Old Testament left it.

So He became man, and as man died upon the Cross, that in Him "who became *sin* for us," the sin might be *killed;* killed at the root and source of its life. Then He was Divine, and so rose and lived again. And

because He lives, we live also—"*in Him*." Jesus Christ is "the Way." He can go to God, and if we are "in Him"—in Him we can go as well.

Here is the solution of the Problem. This is the "call of life." If we come to Jesus Christ confessing our sinfulness, asking God's forgiveness for *His* sake, *identifying*, hiding ourselves in Him, He will lead us into God's presence again. "*In* Jesus Christ" we can live in communion with God. "Greatly forgiven, let us greatly serve."

This is why we call Jesus Christ the World's Redeemer, and why He, and all He means in Life and Death, is "the Church's One Foundation." His Cross is still uplifted over the world, and we live in its shadow. But so often we are like the soldiers at the Crucifixion, and gamble at the foot of the Cross—seeing, but not perceiving it. Yet when one does *perceive*, it is "the solution of the Problem." When we see Him, living, the light of His Presence shows us the murky twilight in which we ordinarily live, and the *difference* makes us feel the awful need of getting rid of the shadows, stains and dark patches which we had not seen before. When we see Him dying for us, and the love inspiring the act, we see what we are worth to Him; when we see Him risen we realise that at last the Way is built right through to God. And the gratitude evoked in us by these things becomes the great mainspring of all Christian life and service. When a soul thus sees and perceives, the rest follows. It does not need to be *told* to be good, or bribed with hopes of Heaven, or terrified with fears of Hell. We want to follow and serve Him simply for His sake, irrespective of all else, out of boundless gratitude. Our life centres no longer in ourselves, but in Him. When I was in France in 1915 a man came into the casualty clearing station, where I then was Chaplain.

He came for healing of the body, and found healing of the soul as well. The change in him was very great. Before he left he said to me : " I am coming to Liverpool to see you after the war. I live near Manchester." Then he added : " I have often been over there before and I got there without paying ; it's easy if you know how. But I won't do that again—*of course that sort of thing's all done with now.*" He said this quite of his own accord. He needed no telling from me. " In His light we see light."

This is the " heart of the Gospel of Christ." It is surpassingly wonderful. To *you,* in your great time of choice, this is THE GREAT CHOICE. *Finally,* it comes to a question of " *Will.*" It was, it is, to the WILL that God and Christ so greatly appeal. Understanding it, even admiring, loving it, is not sufficient. *You must act on your will* as you face the question : *What shall I do in my life with Jesus, which is called Christ ? Will* you accept Christ as your Saviour, your Master of Life ? Will you *unreservedly* give yourself into His keeping for forgiveness of the past, for guidance in the future, for time and for eternity ?

If you will take this great decision, THEN you are ready, fit, to be ' confirmed.' You will be only too glad to acknowledge Him there, and renew your Promise of Life, saying from your very heart, " I do." You will then so gladly kneel to receive the blessing from His servant, the Bishop, and ask for His—Promised—Holy Spirit to " continue His Faithful Soldier and Servant all the days of your life."

CHAPTER III

THE SACRAMENT OF FORGIVENESS

WHAT took place at Calvary was for all time, and for all men. Our individual life depends on our individual acceptance of it. Before He left our earthly life, Jesus Christ emphasised this in the two 'visible,' definite things that He told those to do who would follow Him, and become His disciples, and members of His Society. These two things we call the Sacraments. The one is Holy Baptism, the other is Holy Communion. In your Catechism you will find the definition of a Sacrament. It has six points: all of them are important.

1. *An outward and visible sign,* i.e. the Part you can *see,* and *do.* The visible symbol.

2. (*Of*) *an inward and spiritual grace.* The Part you cannot see. The invisible reality. Grace is strength: spiritual strength.

3. *Given unto us.* It is not to be 'bought,' or 'earned.' It is a 'free gift.'

4. *Ordained by Christ Himself.* Therefore the Sacraments are two: those above mentioned. (Some people, *e.g.* the Roman Catholics, add five others, Confirmation, Matrimony, Holy Orders, Penance, Extreme Unction. The Church of England says these are not real Sacraments, because Jesus Christ Himself did not ordain

them. They are *Sacramental*, because they fulfil other conditions, just as a man may be 'military,' yet not in the actual army.)

5. As a *means* whereby we receive the same, *i.e.* the grace. The Sacrament is not 'the thing itself.' It is the symbol, the means, or way by which 'the thing' comes (just as the *railway line* is the means by which the *train* comes along to you).

6. *As a pledge* to assure us thereof. It is a definite witness, or token or proof of the thing. The War medal, or gold stripe, is a pledge that the soldier, if he lawfully wears it, has been to the War, without any words being said. So the 'Sacrament' is a 'pledge' from God, and to those who behold it.

The "Sacramental Principle," as we call it, is one of the great principles of life. All Life is 'twofold'—Sacramental, in a way. There is always the outward symbol, which is connected with the inward reality. We are 'body and soul,' the body is the outward symbol tied to, or enshrining, the soul, which is our real life. The visible world is 'the Garment of God: the invisible eternal reality is God Himself. You will find the 'Sacramental Principle' everywhere in life. So the Master of Life used it in the two "Sacraments" that He gave us.

With this explanation in mind, we now come to the third and last thing which our Baptism is: it is a Sacrament—the Sacrament of God's Forgiveness. When the minister of Christ took you in his arms at your Baptism, sprinkled a little water on you with the words (giving you your name) "I baptise thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," and then marked you in the water on your forehead with the sign of Christ's Cross, it was a "little picture," or Sacrament. All the conditions were fulfilled. As the

water was sprinkled on your body it was a "little picture" of the Blood of Christ sprinkled on your soul: the Blood of Christ that cleanseth from all sin.

It was the Sacrament of Forgiveness, the individual application to you yourself that the Blood of Christ shed on the Cross for the sins of the whole world included, and was meant for *you*, personally. So your individual "Christian" name was then given to you, and you personally were marked with the Cross as a pledge that you personally now belonged to Him.

Thus "sacramentally" you were forgiven. It remains for you to fulfil your part, and make your Baptism a reality. It is not a "magical incantation." If you never think of it, never 'use' it, or act upon it, it is—as it were—like giving a cheque to a man who never makes the slightest use of it, and forgets that he even has it. But if, when you arrive at your years of discretion, or even as a child (for He calls little children unto Him), you become conscious of Jesus Christ and your need of Him, you can feel that you have a claim upon Him straightaway, and can take Him at His word and "fulfil your Baptism." It is just like 'you and your mother.' She is your mother all the time—even when you did not know what it meant. You do not have to wait till you are conscious of it for her to become your mother. So with God, your Heavenly Father, and Jesus Christ, your Saviour. They are so "all the time," but *when* you act upon and realise and claim it, then it becomes the living thing that it was intended to be, and of which your Baptism is the Sacrament.

So now we have arrived at the three things which your Baptism is:

1. Your Admission to the Divine Kingdom.
2. Your Agreement, or Treaty of Life with God.
3. The Sacrament of God's Forgiveness.

And, as already said, your Confirmation is the "ratification," the completion of your Baptism.

THE CATECHISM

Question.

How many Sacraments hath Christ ordained in his Church ?

Auswer. Two only, as generally necessary to salvation, that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

Question. What meanest thou by this word *Sacrament* ?

Answer. I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.

Question. How many parts are there in a Sacrament ?

Answer. Two: the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace.

Question. What is the outward visible sign or form in Baptism ?

Answer Water; wherein the person is baptised *In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

Question. What is the inward and spiritual grace ?

Auswer. A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness: for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.

Question. What is required of persons to be baptised ?

Answer. Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and Faith, whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that Sacrament.

Question. Why then are infants baptised, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them ?

Answer. Because they promise them both by their Sureties; which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.

CHAPTER IV

THE PROBLEM OF THE FUTURE

EVEN with the Problem of the Past thus solved, there remains the Problem of the Future. For we recognise that with the best intentions in the world, and inspired by all the gratitude that a great Forgiveness should evoke, we are not likely to keep our part of the Treaty in the future as it should be kept. When we begin to think about it, we are only too acutely aware that there is a continual battle going on within us between the Right and the Wrong, and the Right does not always win.

Before we go further into the Problem of the Future, we should look a little more closely into the nature of this battle and the processes of life, and then we shall be in a better position to see in what way we can expect the problem to be solved.

In Chapter IV. of the first part, we perceived that our Soul is our Principle of Life; we live because we have, or are souls. Our soul is our life. When we begin to think about these things, the question soon arises: What is the real purpose of our life? What is our soul for? We eat and drink, work and play, but what really is the *object* of it all?

Now the average idea of most people is that the object

of life is "getting things," especially money and all that money will buy. One finds this idea everywhere. If anyone says of somebody else "He's getting on," every person who hears it instinctively takes it as meaning he is getting more *money*. Books and plays and social life generally are imbued with this idea; we live in its atmosphere. But the MASTER of Life (*i.e.* the One who does know about it) told us distinctly nineteen centuries ago that "*a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth*" (St. Luke, xii, 15). Jesus Christ taught plainly that the object of life is not "getting things," but "Communion with God."

If you want to know for what purpose anything is intended, the way to find out is "to ask the maker." God made us. We find that He did not make us just 'to get money,' but He made us for Himself, just as, in a human way, a good father does not look upon his children simply as profitable investments, but as those whom he loves *for their own sakes*, and whose love in return he desires more than anything else.

You will find out this great truth in life in another way as you are growing up. If, and when, you "fall in love" with somebody, if it is "the real thing," you will know that it is the one thing in the world worth having, and no amount of money or other things can take its place. More than anything else you will desire to spend your life with the one you love, sharing together every experience of life, and in this you will find your highest earthly happiness. Its "glory" will consist in the fact that increasingly you will be aware that time and *death* will not alter it, for 'Love' goes on beyond the grave. Your 'soul' has found its object, on the earthly scale, and it runs into the heavenly. For 'this' is the real thing. God is Love. Your earthly

love and 'Communion' is the shadow, the copy of the heavenly, and to have the earthly *fully*, you must have the heavenly.

Sometimes you will see in sacred buildings the letters D.O.M. They stand for "DEO OPTIMO MAXIMOQUE": "To God, the Greatest and the Best." Always think of God as that. He is the Eternal Father, Eternal Love, the "Greatest and the Best," and the eternal 'object' of your soul and life is to love and live in communion with Him. It is because He is 'that,' and if you thus love Him, that your highest earthly happiness and love are eternal, for it is of, and from Him.

Thus really you see that earth is a place, not for merely getting money, but for "growing souls"—to love and to be loved, in ways both human and divine. Here are two beautiful quotations. Think over them. "The supreme happiness of life is the conviction that one is loved, and loved for oneself alone," said the great Frenchman, Victor Hugo. "It is when we think of those we love best that our noblest thoughts come to us, and the worthier they are of our love, the nobler the thought: hence it is that no one ever did the best work who did not love God," says Sir J. M. Barrie.

D.O.M. again!

This therefore is the soul and its object: the life and the centre of things. Let us now go a step further. Realising that the soul is the key of the situation, we begin to perceive that the battle continually going on within us is really a struggle between rival forces for the control and direction of the *soul*, because that which rules the soul, rules the life. Each of the different 'parts' of us tries to rule.

1. First of all, the 'Body,' which belongs to the Animal Kingdom, continually tries to assert its sway.

Perhaps this is the commonest aspect of the struggle, because the 'bodily passions' are strong in varying ways in every one of us, and we all know their power. You must not fall into the common error of thinking that 'the body' and all its activities are bad and wicked. For, as we have pointed out before, God made it. It is good and beautiful in its place; but its place is 'servant,' and not master. If 'the body' rules the soul it becomes what St. Paul calls 'the flesh,' and if 'the flesh' rules the life, Communion with God, the Greatest and the Best, is broken and impossible.

2. The Mind—of our Human Kingdom—is by many taken to be the power that should rule our life. Once again, it is good in its place, and the gift of God, but life is not merely cleverness or knowledge. On the eternal scale, *character* is always greater than *intellect*. Because a man, or nation, is great, it does not mean necessarily that it is *good*, and life is 'Communion' with God, who is not only the *greatest*, but the *best*.

There is a beautiful story that St. Augustine tells about himself. When he was a little boy, his father told him to be great, and his mother told him to be good!

Years passed; he won a name for himself and became "great"; then he "found Christ," and became good. When he did so he called across to his mother—then in the spirit world—and said "My father told me to be great, and you told me to be good. *It is good to be great, but it is greater to be good.*"

3. Many think and say that the soul should rule itself. All our human emotions, feelings, sensations are functions of the soul. Again, these are beautiful in their place, and God-given. But if a man lets himself be exclusively ruled by these, it will lead him to 'shipwreck,' and "for the sake of life he will lose the cause

of living." If our life were entirely self-contained, the soul could well rule itself, with due regard to the lives of others, but we are meant to live in 'Communion with God,' and therefore for the fulness of life we have to take Him, and all He is, into account.

4. The Spirit—of our Divine Kingdom—remains, and it is this which God intends and desires to direct and rule our hearts and souls and lives. Remember, as we have previously said, our 'spirit' is the gift of God's own essence and nature, whereby we are His Children and He our Father. If you like, you can call it the 'soul of your soul.' If His Spirit within us controls our lives—body, mind and soul all fall into their proper places. Each fulfils its part and contributes its share to the fulness and happiness of our lives, and the directing spirit keeps us in "Communion with God," which is Life indeed.

Now we can see more plainly the nature of the Battle of Life. It is a 'fight' for the control of our souls between the spirit, who should rule, and the other parts of our lives, which, in varying ways, seek to do so. This is THE FIGHT, and we all realise it when we are told about it.

What then is necessary to keep our Agreement in the Future? Surely it is that the spirit should be strong enough, and kept strong enough, to rule our lives and keep them in communion with God, the Infinite Spirit and Father of Life, and Light and Love. Strength of *spirit* is what we need. Men may be great and strong in body, strong in mind, strong in soul; but these do not *necessarily* make men 'good' (*i.e.* like God). This comes from greatness and strength of spirit. To keep our spirit strong enough to 'rule' our lives: strong enough to fight and prevail against the other things that try to control us, is the problem of the Future.

It is not enough to have only the past forgiven, when the Future stretches out before us with all its conflicts and struggles to be fought and won.

Thus the Future has its problem too. We see now that the solution depends on the 'spirit,' and the possibility of its being able continually to find, and get sufficient strength to enable it to rule our bodies, minds and souls, and to keep our lives in contact, communion and union with the Infinite Spirit, God, our Maker and Father, the Greatest and the Best.

Fight the good fight with all thy might,
Christ is thy Strength, and Christ thy Right;
Lay hold on life, and it shall be
Thy joy and crown eternally.

Run the straight race through God's good grace,
Lift up thine eyes, and seek His Face;
Life with its way before us lies,
Christ is the path, and Christ the prize.

Cast care aside, lean on thy Guide;
His boundless mercy will provide;
Trust, and thy trusting soul shall prove
Christ is its life, and Christ its love.

Faint not nor fear, His Arms are near,
He changeth not, and thou art dear;
Only believe, and thou shalt see
That Christ is all in all to thee.

CHAPTER V

CONFIRMATION: THE SECOND THING

AT the close of the previous chapter, we saw that Confirmation is, first of all, the "ratification" of our Baptismal Treaty of Life. Now we come to the Second thing that it is. In the last chapter we saw that the need of the future is strength of spirit. There is one word which, in course of time, has come to signify this kind of strength. It is "Grace." First of all, it meant 'favour,' and 'kindly disposition,' then, as God's favour always brings His strength, it has come to be used in this sense.

St. Paul brings the whole problem and solution of the future before us in a question and answer that he has given us. Thinking of these matters he once asked, "Who is sufficient for these things" (2 Cor. ii, 16), and he found the answer came to him from God: "My GRACE is sufficient for thee" (2 Cor. xii, 9). In the strength of this answer he "fought the good fight" victoriously through to the very end.

God's grace, the strength of His spirit that He gives, will be sufficient for us, and it can be ours for the asking. Our Confirmation is the sacramental occasion of the bestowing of this Grace of the Holy Spirit in the 'laying on of hands.' Confirmation, as already explained,

is not a full Sacrament, because it was not "ordained by Christ Himself," but it is "sacramental," for it fulfils the other conditions of a Sacrament. If, so far as we know, Jesus Christ did not Himself directly ordain 'Confirmation,' we can be certain that it is not contrary to His will, for the Apostles practised and enjoined it, and deeply taught as they were by the Spirit in the things of God, we can be sure that they would not have done this had it not been pleasing unto Him and profitable unto men.

The earliest name for Confirmation is the "laying on of hands," and the meaning attached to it is the receiving of the Holy Spirit. The first instance of its occurrence is by St. Peter and St. John at Samaria, and you will find the account of it in Acts viii, 14–17. The Church of England exactly follows the primitive custom. St. Philip, the Deacon, could preach the Word of God, and baptise, but it was the Apostles who laid their hands on the disciples. So to-day, we 'clergy' do the first things, but it is the Bishop who comes to "confirm." Frequently in the Bible one meets with the symbolical act of the "laying on of hands." It is the sign of blessing; or of dedicating anyone to a particular office; or of healing; or, as in Confirmation, of bestowing the gift of the Holy Spirit. This Holy Spirit of God it is that Jesus Christ said He Himself would send to take His place among us. The Holy Spirit is *meant* to be to us what Jesus Christ was to His disciples. He Himself is of eternal value to the whole world, and so it was "good" for us that He Himself with His earthly limitations of a human body should 'go away,' as He Himself said (St. John, xvi, 7).

The Holy Spirit is Infinite and Eternal and not tied down to time and place, so all over the world 'He' can be present at all times as, of course, the Blessed Master

could not be when in His human form. Jesus Christ said that when the Spirit came, He would be present with us always, and would teach us, guide us, comfort (*i.e.* strengthen) us.

This is exactly what we need to enable us to keep our agreement of Life in the future: to fight the battle of Life in our souls, and to keep us 'in touch with God,' which is Life indeed.

Like can touch like. The Divine Spirit of God can therefore touch *our* spirit, which comes from God, and strengthen and reinforce it, so that His spirit, becoming ours, can in all things direct and rule our hearts. As you will find in the second chapter of the Acts, the Holy Spirit first came to the disciples, as a body, on the Feast of Pentecost, which we now call Whit Sunday. We always commemorate this every year on that day: it is the Festival of the Holy Spirit, or the birthday of the Christian Church.

Now the Holy Spirit was not only given 'generally' to the little band of the Apostles, but it "sat upon each of them." Each one individually received the gift, exactly as Jesus Christ did not only die on the Cross for the sins of the whole world, but also for each of us individually. In your Baptism, this was 'assured' to you personally; the waters of Baptism were the individual application to you, sacramentally, of the Redeeming Blood of Christ shed for all mankind. So with the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Apostles laid their hands upon the baptised Christians to 'assure them by this sign' that the Holy Spirit poured out generally upon the 'Church' was also individually bestowed. Your Confirmation should be to you the same thing. It is the sacramental Symbol assuring you that the Holy Spirit is meant for you personally and individually, as well as generally to the whole Church.

Of course, you must not assume that only at that time, and exclusively in that way, the Holy Spirit is given unto men. But the Apostles then, and the Church now, does connect the bestowing of the Holy Spirit with a definite act: the laying on of hands by the Bishop with prayer for the descent of the Spirit of God.

Thus your Confirmation is this second thing, and it is the main thing in a way. One talks of "being Confirmed" meaning this. After you have "confirmed," ratified your Agreement of Life in your Confirmation promise "I do," you are then confirmed by the Bishop laying his hand upon your head with prayer that the Holy Spirit will "defend you that you may continue His for ever and daily increase in His Holy Spirit until your life's end." Sacramentally it is the gift of the Holy Spirit to enable you to keep your promise in the future, just as sacramentally Holy Baptism is the symbol of God's Forgiveness of 'the past.' You yourself must fulfil your part to make these Sacraments of real, vital value. They are waiting for your 'fulfilment' to become a living reality.

Never forget the 'personal application' in both instances, or allow yourself to feel that you are 'lost in the crowd' of God's children. He calleth His own sheep "by name," and knows them individually. Religion is never much more than a beautiful philosophy until it becomes *personal*. The essence of the real, practical value of these great Sacramental gifts of God is that they assure us personally, individually, of their meaning to us, as well as to all the world.

This is the value and "point" of the beautiful little summary of the Creed that follows it in the Catechism. Your Religion becomes *real* and of living value to you when from your heart you can say, "I believe in God who made *me* . . . who redeemed *me* . . . who sanctifieth

me . . . as well as all the world." Your Confirmation, as your Baptism, assures you of this. Hold fast to it. It will save you from feeling "lost in the crowd," and believing that God loves and cares for *you*, you will grow to "love and care for God."

THE ORDER OF CONFIRMATION

OR LAYING ON OF HANDS UPON THOSE THAT ARE BAPTISED AND COME TO YEARS OF DISCRETION.

¶ *Upon the day appointed, all that are to be then confirmed, being placed, and standing in order, before the Bishop ; he (or some other Minister appointed by him) shall read this Preface following.*

To the end that Confirmation may be ministered to the more edifying of such as shall receive it, the Church hath thought good to order, That none hereafter shall be Confirmed, but such as can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments ; and can also answer to such other Questions, as in the short Catechism are contained : which order is very convenient to be observed ; to the end, that children, being now come to the years of discretion, and having learned what their Godfathers and Godmothers promised for them in Baptism, they may themselves, with their own mouth and consent, openly before the Church, ratify and confirm the same ; and also promise, that by the grace of God they will evermore endeavour themselves faithfully to observe such things, as they, by their own confession, have assented unto.

¶ *Then shall the Bishop say,*

Do ye here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that was made in your name at your Baptism ; ratifying and confirming the same in your own persons, and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe, and to do, all those things, which your Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook for you ?

¶ *And every one shall audibly answer,*

I do.

The Bishop.

Our help is in the Name of the Lord :
Answer. Who hath made heaven and earth.

Bishop. Blessed be the Name of the Lord ;
Answer. Henceforth, world without end.
Bishop. Lord, hear our prayers.
Answer. And let our cry come unto thee.

The Bishop. Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY and everliving God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy servants by Water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins ; Strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace ; the spirit of wisdom and understanding ; the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength ; the spirit of knowledge and true godliness ; and fill them, O Lord, with the spirit of thy holy fear, now and for ever. *Amen.*

¶ *Then all of them in order kneeling before the Bishop, he shall lay his hand upon the head of every one severally, saying,*

DEFEND, O Lord, this thy Child [or *this thy Servant*] with thy heavenly grace, that *he* may continue thine for ever ; and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more and more, until *he* come unto thy everlasting kingdom. Amen.

¶ *Then shall the Bishop say,*

The Lord be with you.

Answer. And with thy spirit.

¶ *And (all kneeling down) the Bishop shall add,*

Let us pray.

OUR Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation ; But deliver us from evil. Amen.

And this Collect.

ALMIGHTY and everliving God, who makest us both to will and to do those things that be good and acceptable unto thy divine Majesty ; We make our humble supplications unto thee for these thy servants, upon whom (after the example of thy holy Apostles) we have now laid our hands, to certify them (by this sign) of thy favour and gracious goodness towards them. Let thy fatherly hand, we beseech thee, ever be over them ; let thy Holy Spirit ever be with them ; and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of thy Word, that in the end they may obtain everlasting life ; through our Lord Jesus Christ, who with thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

O ALMIGHTY Lord, and everlasting God, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to direct, sanctify, and govern, both our hearts and bodies, in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments; that, through thy most mighty protection both here and ever, we may be preserved in body and soul; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

¶ *Then the Bishop shall bless them, saying thus,*

THE Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be upon you, and remain with you for ever. *Amen.*

¶ *And there shall none be admitted to the holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed.*

CHAPTER VI

THE PROBLEM OF " CONTINUING "

WE have seen that the Problem of the Future is one of " strengthening our Spirit " in order that it may be able to control our life, and keep it in touch with God, and that our Confirmation is the sacramental occasion of receiving this gift of Spirit from the only giver of it—God.

There remains to be considered the ' second part ' of the Problem of the Future, which, as a matter of fact and experience, is harder than the first. Our ' Spirit ' needs not only to be strengthened once : it must be ' kept strong.' Most people are capable of an isolated effort in a time of emergency : to enable the effort to be *continual* is not so easy. Yet it is vitally necessary in all things if the ' results ' are to be kept after the victory is won. Life is a ' *continual* ' process, and its " strength " must be continually maintained. Just as its bodily and mental strength is sustained only by being regularly nourished, so with its spiritual. The supply of strength must be regular and continual. Thus the most important things for our lives from the highest standpoint is that its spiritual strength should always be maintained, and kept efficient for directing and ruling the life, and in touch with God. Already we have said that the name for spiritual strength is ' Grace ' ; the problem thus becomes one of considering the " means

of Grace," that is, the ways of obtaining a regular and continuous supply of spiritual strength.

Before we begin to investigate into these means, there are a few preliminary things that we can profitably take into consideration, and which will guide us in our inquiry.

1. Obviously we realise that the needed 'grace' must come from God, for He is Infinite Spirit. He is its only source: the Lord and Giver of Life. The supply of strength is infinite in amount. "Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength," says the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah, xxvi, 4). "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus," says St. Paul (Phil. iv, 19).

"How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" are the words of Jesus Christ Himself (St. Luke, xi, 13).

These are great and mighty truths. Think over them continually. God has a sufficiency of strength for us all, and is willing and able and anxious to give it to those that ask Him.

2. It is with our *spirit* that we get into touch and communicate with God, and it is by means of our spirit that we can receive strength from Him. Only "Like can communicate with like," and can "understand" it, and correspond with it. As we have so often said, and repeat again, it is because He hath given us of His Spirit that we can understand and speak to Him, and He to us. For like can correspond with like. As Tennyson so beautifully and truly says:

> "Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet.
> Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

3. The extent to which we obtain strength depends not on God, for He is infinitely willing and able to supply our need, but on *our willingness and capacity* to receive. God 'compels' no one. We are 'free,' and have the awful power of "choosing" in this thing, as in others. In Holman Hunt's wonderful picture of "The Light of the World," Jesus Christ is seen standing outside the door and knocking. There is no latch visible; it is *on 'the inside,'* for it rests with us whether we will admit Him into our life. It is the same with the Holy Spirit. *We* have the power of receiving, or refusing the strength which He offers.

Again, the extent to which we obtain grace depends on our *capacity* to receive it. It may be very weak at first; our spirit grows, like our mind and body. With practice and use it grows more able and accustomed to receive strength. Out at the Front, the extent to which the men in the trenches get their rations depends on the state of the "communications." There may be more than all they want waiting at the base, but if the communications are cut, it is of no use to them! It is precisely the same in spiritual things. If our lines of communication with God are weak, neglected or choked up, our "spiritual rations" cannot come up to where we are 'in the front line.' On the other hand, the more the communications are used, the better and stronger they become. This is one meaning of the Lord's own words: "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath" (St. Matt. xiii, 12; xxv, 29).

So, to begin with, realise these things about your relationship to God, and the ways in which strength will come. And remember always that life is a battle. The

spirit has to fight unceasingly in its effort to rule your body, mind and soul. "Does it become easier, as life goes on?" a young Christian once asked of an old Saint. His answer was, "No, my son, it does not become easier, but He giveth more grace."

CHAPTER VII

THE MEANS OF GRACE

1. *Prayer*

THERE are four main ways in which you receive strength and as the receiving of strength for your spirit should be a continual process while you live, these ways are connected with corresponding rules of life, which you should always try to keep.

The means of Grace are (1) Prayer, (2) Public Worship, (3) Bible Reading, (4) Holy Communion. We will look in turn at them all.

Prayer.—From what has been already said, it can surely be seen that the common idea that prayer is simply asking for things, as in a shop, is a very imperfect, even erroneous one.

Prayer is not merely, or mainly, asking for things. The essence of Prayer is *Communion:* the intercourse of spirit with spirit, our spirit with the Holy Spirit, God. Our relation to our Heavenly Parent is exactly parallel with that to our earthly parent. You do not, you should not, look on your father and mother simply as people who will give you things for nothing, or only speak to them when you want something, and be annoyed if you don't get it, and at once. Yet this is the common

attitude that many people take up with regard to God and Prayer. But if you have a good father and mother, you and they will find your greatest happiness and delight in your mutual love and consciousness of it. You love to talk with and be with them. Where they are, is your *home*. They will give you everything they can if they have it, and think it good for you, and you trust their love and wisdom enough to realise that they know best. This is the attitude that we should take up with regard to our Heavenly Father, realising that His love and His wisdom are as infinite as are " the riches of His Grace."

We follow Jesus Christ in comparing our earthly and heavenly Father ; we can follow Him in another comparison which we would not dare to use, did He not give it to us. If you are happy in life, the day will come to you when a love as great as, even greater than the love of parent and child will be yours, and that is married love, the love between husband and wife. Jesus Christ used to call Himself the Bridegroom, and His Church the Bride. The love between husband and wife is, again, a little human picture of the love of God for us, just as is that between parent and child. " Jesu, Lover of my Soul," we often sing. Think of this very reverently, very really. In your struggle and battle of Life, when your spirit, helped by God's spirit, as much as you will let it, is trying to keep your soul from being ruled by evil things, realise that the struggle is for something—your soul—that Jesus Christ *loves*.

I always remember a beautiful extract in a letter that a mother once wrote about her child : " What I pray that my little girl will find in her husband when she grows up and marries is not so much riches and good looks and position and talent as *Community of Soul*. That is the essential thing, compared with it nothing else matters."

This is the essential thing with God and you: communion of Soul, of your spirit with His spirit. And this is Prayer, in its greatest sense. Keep your 'line of communication' with Him always open, so that easily you can touch Him, and easily His strength can come to you. Learn to 'speak' to God, the Greatest and the Best, as to your Father, your Lover, your Friend. Hear Jesus Christ's invitation to you:

> "Come, tell Me all ye have said and done,
> Your victories and failures, hopes and fears."

This is Prayer. Just in proportion as you use it, so the 'faculty' enormously develops. Realise that in God is Infinite Wisdom, Love and Strength. And God *knows* all, before you ask or tell Him. Yet He 'loves' to be told, just as your mother or father does.

THEN the rest follows naturally! "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, *before* ye ask Him." "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His Righteousness, and all these things (what you will eat, and drink, and wear) will be added unto you" (St. Matt. vi, 32–33). It is with God, only infinitely so, exactly as with your earthly parents; they will only too gladly give as needed. Of course there are tremendous difficulties, and problems hard to solve, in these matters. So often, often, prayers seem to be unanswered! But these *main lines* are eternally true. We must realise our limitations! We know so little; we can 'see' so little. One perceives it increasingly. Then we have to try not to be 'selfish' in our prayers. God cares for us individually, but His Family is world-wide; we must not ask, or receive to the detriment of others, or of our real eternal welfare, in His Almighty Sight. But in all your difficulties, hold fast to these *main lines*, which are true. If the great 'central Communion' of your Soul with God

is established, " all things work together for good to *them that love God* " (Rom. viii, 28). Fulfil the Conditions, and the other part will work right in the end. This is the practical experience, not only of St. Paul, but also of unnumbered thousands of God's children in every age and place and time and circumstance.

Prayer is essentially a spiritual thing. Keep your line of communication open and the strength and needed things will come along.

So the practical rule of life here appears : *Never* let a day pass without " *saying your prayers.*" Let that become part and parcel of your life, just as much as washing, and dressing and eating and drinking. Make it a daily *habit.* Even if at times you don't feel inclined or " in the mood " to say your prayers, it is wisest and best to keep on the old habit! When the spirit revives, it will find the habit ready for its use again.

If I may add a personal note—such notes are valuable in this connection—I well remember myself, when at the University, that for a long time all meaning seemed to me to go out of " prayers," yet from my earliest childhood I had been taught at home to ' say my prayers ' morning and evening, and I " could not get rid of the habit." I have never ceased to be thankful that I ' kept them on,' even when they meant little or nothing to me, for later on, when I found the ' spirit ' came back again, there was the ' old habit ' waiting for it.

So keep your " line of communication " open, even if little or nothing of what you want seems to ' come along.' Very reverently, I believe our loving Heavenly Father " understands " and sympathises. His Love never fails. He is always hoping, looking, waiting for His children to come to Him. So keep the ' way ' open ; you will be glad of it some day, if not now. " Pray without ceasing."

Catechist.

My good Child, know this, that thou art not able to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the Commandments of God, and to serve him, without his special grace; which thou must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer. Let me hear therefore, if thou canst say the Lord's Prayer.

Answer.

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. Amen.

Question. What desirest thou of God in this Prayer?

Answer. I desire my Lord God our heavenly Father, who is the giver of all goodness, to send his grace unto me, and to all people; that we may worship him, serve him, and obey him, as we ought to do. And I pray unto God, that he will send us all things that be needful both for our souls and bodies; and that he will be merciful unto us, and forgive us our sins; and that it will please him to save and defend us in all dangers ghostly (*i.e.* spiritual) and bodily; and that he will keep us from all sin and wickedness, and from our ghostly enemy, and from everlasting death. And this I trust he will do of his mercy and goodness, through our Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore I say, Amen, So be it.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MEANS OF GRACE

2. *Public Worship*

As we have already perceived, the secret of Life is to keep in touch with God, and the supply of spiritual strength that we continually need comes only from Him, its Lord and Giver. Prayer is the Communion with God that, keeping us in touch, makes the supply possible. This Prayer must not only be private and individual; it must also be public and general. 'No one liveth to himself' either in physical or in spiritual things. We are not isolated beings, like so many Robinson Crusoes, but interdependent beings, living in great human societies. The *unit* of the human race is not the individual, but the family; father, mother and child, just as 'the Unit' of God is Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Thus your *private* line of communication with God is not, should not be, your only means of access and of grace. Just as all the other acts and phases of your life are in touch and connection with other people, so are your spiritual activities. We have to live as members of a great human family in things of body and of mind; the same is true of the things of spirit. Thus Jesus Christ attached 'a special blessing' to the getting

together of the "two or three": promising that when that was done in His name, He would be 'in the midst.' So your Private Prayer should always be supplemented with Public Prayer; that is, 'going to church' for public worship. People have often just the same imperfect and erroneous ideas about 'going to church' as they have about Prayer. Neither has merely "getting things" as its main object. Some people say they can be good enough without going to church: others say they are 'not good enough to go.' Neither meets the point. For a professing Christian, the example of Jesus Christ is a sufficient reason for going to church. In our words, He went to church regularly every Sunday. St. Luke tells us (iv, 16) "He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, *as His custom was*, He went into the synagogue on the sabbath day."

The object of going to church is to worship God; to adore Him on earth, as the angels ever do in heaven. In order to do this aright, we must be "reconciled" to Him, through sin confessed and sin forgiven; then we can 'hear His voice,' and put before Him all our needs, both of soul and body. The familiar old exhortation, "Dearly beloved brethren," puts these things very clearly before us, but so often it falls on unheeding ears. And these acts of praise, of confession, and of intercession are needed by us publicly as well as privately, because we *generally* need to do them, as well as *individually*. There is not only the 'little private line of communication' with God that needs to be kept open, but also the *main highway*, which we all collectively use, because we live together. A soldier's sustenance at the Front depends not only on his little bit of line being kept open, but also on the main line of communication with the base. In this time of war, our national safety does not depend on each man stopping at home

to defend his own home ; we can only fight, and beat the enemy, *as an army*. It is just the same in the things of spirit. We have to ' draw near ' and get into touch with God, generally and ' corporately,' as well as individually and personally. Again, a man who only prays at home, and privately for himself, becomes very often selfish ; he depends on *others* to keep his main line open, while he simply cares about his private little bit. There is a great, blessed unselfishness about public prayer and worship. By ' going to church ' you are keeping the main line open for others, perhaps at a time when they need it very greatly. Out at the Front, when in the line, I continually used to say to my men, especially just as they were going into action, " Remember that they are praying for us at home ; and I hope that every one of you is being daily brought before God by name by someone in the old country." This always seemed to ' touch ' the men, even when they did not pray themselves. I remember some of us talking together about these things one Sunday night after a rather eventful week. One man said ' he knew he had always someone praying for him in the old church at home.' Hearing this, another gave a bitter laugh and said, " That's one place I'm pretty certain where my Missus isn't." A third one suddenly broke in, as if he had discovered something new, and said, " Well, I never expected to get through this last show ; I wouldn't be surprised if there wasn't someone remembering me." Of course we don't *always*—or all of us—talk like that out at the Front, any more than we do at home. But very often, especially at night time, as a few of us were together, the conversation would turn on to these things, and we men got glimpses of the " main trail " and dimly felt we were in touch with bigger things than we dreamed.

Always realise that you are not 'alone' in the great battle of life, but part of a mighty army, and the army *must* live as a whole, as well as by individuals.

Thus then emerges your second practical rule of life. The first is Daily Prayer. This second one is regular Public Worship in church on Sunday: the Lord's Day. No Sunday is rightly spent unless it finds you fulfilling this first duty of worshipping God thereon, and everything else you undertake and do on that day must be compatible with it. Even if you are on a holiday, or have necessary Sunday work to do, or friends come in, or the weather is bad, remember that your worship should be offered at least at some service during the day, and if you 'love God,' it will be a duty that you love.

When you come, realise you come to worship and that the church is a holy place, dedicated to God for His service: it does not exist for 'money'; its very walls have witnessed souls drawing near to God, and its atmosphere is fragrant with prayer, and speaks of the great Presence.

Come, as into His presence, to offer your little weekly sacrifice of praise and worship, and to get into touch with God; to ask your Divine Friend for His help and grace; to pour out before Him your needs and ask His blessing for the coming week. Realise also that you are 'there' as part of the whole 'army' as well as an individual soul. Let this idea of worship be in everything. Join in the service, and the singing as an act of worship; listen to the sermon in the same way, and when the collection takes place, 'follow your offering,' and as the officiating minister presents the collection at the Holy Table, realise that he is offering unto God in worship what you have given to Him from your earnings of the past week.

One last word. Just as in daily prayer, so with your weekly worship. Let it be 'regular.' Realise you are *worshipping God,* and in spite perhaps of human obstacles your access to Him is immediate through Jesus Christ, "the Way." Nothing can interfere with that. Let your thought and prayer be

> "God is a spirit: they who worship Him,
> In spirit and in Truth must bow the knee:
> Oh Thou, who dwellest 'neath the Cherubim,
> Draw nigh to us, as we draw nigh to Thee."

CHAPTER IX

THE MEANS OF GRACE

3. *Bible Reading*

ALL of us know how letters cheer and help us when we are away from home. During this present War the number of letters sent through the post has increased tremendously; people who have written and received very few in ordinary times have found out the value of both writing and receiving them. Out at the Front men would often prefer to be short of food rather than deprived of their letters; their value as a help and incentive in warfare has been proved conclusively. It is just the same at home. In many households, to many lives, the postman means more than anything else. Letters are truly what we call "means of Grace," ways of receiving not only news, but strength, courage, inspiration.

In spiritual things the same fact exists. The Bible is the Holy Book of our Religion; it is a collection of writings in many forms telling us about the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. Speaking generally, it is the history of the relations between God and Man from the Creation of the world, through the Fall of Man and the Redemption by Jesus Christ, to the Final Vision

when the " Restoration " shall be complete, and God be " all in all." It is not a treatise on history, geography or natural science or philosophy, though it touches on all these subjects. It does not consciously attempt to give a *proof*, or *definition*, of God or of Man. It takes the existence of both for granted rather than attempts to prove them. Such an attempt, in our sense of the word, probably did not cross the minds of the various writers, although very consciously they ' tackled ' some problems of life—*e.g.* of pain and suffering—and in the poetical books they meditate upon the being of God. But the Bible mainly is a record of the *relations* between God and Man rather than an exposition of the nature of either of them. It is a ' history ' of the revelation of God to Man. It is a gradual revelation, and a growing one. Always realise that, as age succeeded to age, God gradually revealed Himself, as men were able to bear it. Realise also that the process is still going on, and to-day we have still to learn more and more what God and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit mean to the world.

Thus do not expect to find in the earliest records of the Bible a twentieth century idea of God, but perceive that things were told as men were able to receive it, and in ways that they could understand. The Bible is a *gradual growing* revelation, but an imperfect, or imperfectly grasped, revelation is not necessarily an erroneous one. Your idea at two years old of your mother was very ' imperfect ' compared with what it is now that you are twenty, but it was not ' erroneous.' She is still " mother," and has been " mother " all the time, even if your ideas and knowledge have been growing continuously. The men who wrote the Bible were ' human beings.' We believe that they were divinely taught of God, but the inspiration of the Holy Spirit did not destroy their human faculties, or guarantee

them against making mistakes in writing and compiling, any more than in their lives. So do not 'be afraid' when you find apparent contradictions, or expect from Moses and David a knowledge of God that you find in St. John or St. Paul. Learn to look for the eternal spiritual meaning in the story. Historically, the journeys and doings of the Israelites are interesting, but their unseen value is in the fact that they are a great picture of human life on its way to the Promised Land. The doings of the 'Kings of Israel and Judah,' their prophets and their people are again historically interesting, but their real life-value to us lies in the revelation of the fact that the Christian troubles and difficulties do not end when we are in the Promised Land. Jesus Christ Himself, the Master of Life, recognised that the revelation of God is a gradual thing and that the standards and ideas of men grow and get better from age to age. He contrasts them: "It was said to you by them of old time . . . but *I* say unto you. . . ."

Thus realise that the wonderful collection of books and writings that we call our Bible has had a long and varied history, but in it all, as led by the Spirit, we can find the messages of God, for it contains His Eternal 'Word' and unfolds His mind. The mistakes of men, in ideas and deeds, can teach us as much as their successes in both. Read the Bible as containing messages from God, sometimes by way of rebuke and warning, sometimes by way of guidance and encouragement, sometimes given in a picture, or allegory, or incident; sometimes in plain, definite words. Thus you will find the strength of God coming to your spirit to guide and encourage and help you in your battle of life.

Here again another practical duty and rule of life emerges. As in your private prayer and public worship, cultivate regularity in *Reading your Bible* daily; let it

always accompany your daily prayers. Follow a system, else you will soon find that you lose the habit. You may not have time to read the daily lessons, as set forth in the Prayer-book; if not, join a Scripture or Bible Reading Union, and get a card with daily portions for the year. Your vicar will gladly give you one or tell you where to get it. Whenever you can, learn some of it by heart. A man who was very fond of music once told me that he had formed the habit of learning by heart what he most loved. The reason that he gave was that if anything happened whereby he was cut off from all access to his beloved music, what he had stored in his memory could not be taken away from him! Learn thus some of your best messages from God by heart. Then "your joy no man taketh from you." It will go with you into all your life, and be with you when perhaps you are cut off from all outside aid, and be truly a grace to help in time of need.

CHAPTER X

THE MEANS OF GRACE

4. *Holy Communion*

In a previous chapter we said that Confirmation meant three things. It is first, the ratifying of our Treaty of Life with God made in our Baptism; secondly, the sacramental gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of the Bishop's hands. Of these two we have already spoken; now we come to the third, which is admission to the full privileges of the Christian Society.

In your Baptism you became a member of the Church of Christ, but you were a 'probationary' member; in your Confirmation you become a full member. In the eyes of the State, you 'come of age' when you reach twenty-one; in the eyes of the Church, you 'come of age' when you are confirmed. Then all its privileges are open to you, and you are eligible to come to Holy Communion, which is the visible, distinctive mark of the grown-up Christian.

Holy Communion is the second Sacrament, as Holy Baptism is the first. You will remember the definition of a sacrament with its six points, which apply to both of these things that Jesus Christ gave to us. Thus Holy Communion has a double aspect: the outward symbol

and the inward reality. It is also the fourth " means of Grace."

But before we look into these things, it will be well if we first of all go back and examine its origin, so that we can the more easily see what is the real idea underlying it, and why it became the great distinctive mark of the Christian Faith and Practice and Life.

Holy Communion goes back to the little " Upper Room." There, in the night before He died, Jesus Christ was having the Last Supper with His disciples. In the course of the meal, the Master of Life took some of the bread and wine that was on the table before Him, laid His hand upon them, and blessed them, and then gave them to His disciples to eat and drink, calling them His Body given and His Blood shed for them, and bidding them do this in remembrance of Him.

Ever since that night this has been carried on and continued by His followers. In course of time almost endless variations and differences have arisen in the method of " celebrating the Holy Communion," but the essence is, or should be, always a repetition of what took place in the Upper Room. As time went on, a form of service grew up round it, sometimes stately and elaborate, sometimes plain and simple, but the *essence* is the same. The greatest tragedy of our religion is that round the holiest rite of our Faith, the bitterest quarrels, persecutions, even wars have taken place, showing how pitifully often we human beings fight for shadows and forget realities. Even now we differ, but we are beginning to ' agree to differ,' realising that if we human beings are not all alike, yet we are all children of One Almighty Father, redeemed by One Saviour, blessed by One Holy Spirit.

So to-day in almost every part of the world, in the Church of England, in your own parish church, you will

find the Holy Communion celebrated. Outwardly, everything has necessarily very greatly changed from the original institution; circumstances, surroundings and habits have altered; we ourselves are people of an entirely different race, tongue and civilisation; there are great varieties and differences of administration in our own midst, apart from those that exist in other places; but the one great central bond is that, according to our several lights and opportunities, we seek to do what our Blessed Lord told us to do. We seek in spirit to repeat the scene in the Upper Room as faithfully as we can, humbly praying that thereby we can receive the grace, inherit the blessing, that He attached to it, and experience the presence of Him who said, that whenever we met together in His name, and did these things, He Himself would be in the midst. However much outward things may differ, this is the real spiritual way of "rightly and duly celebrating and receiving the Holy Communion."

Anyone who professes to be a loyal follower of Jesus Christ must surely feel bound to observe this last command of the dying Redeemer—to do these things in remembrance of Him; and also to observe the last command of the Ascending Redeemer—to go into all the world, preaching the Gospel to every creature.

Both commands are 'final.' If He is our Lord and Master, our duty is to obey to the best of our ability.

CHAPTER XI

HOLY COMMUNION

1. *The Service*

ALTHOUGH the spiritual meaning and reality is the one that you must ever have before your eyes, yet you must not think that the outward methods do not matter at all. If Holy Communion be the visible central feature of our religion, it surely follows that the greatest care should be taken to see that everything in connection with it is done "decently and in order." So, when we find, as we do, that ever since the beginning, the Christian worship and doctrine have been maintained and handed on by a regular organisation, one naturally expects to continue in the same way. The duty of explaining their attitude and defending their practice lies on those who depart from the ancient order, not on those who abide by it.

The Service of Holy Communion in the Prayer-book of the Church of England has these necessary qualifications; the alterations that have taken place have been made in a regular way by those qualified to do so, and as has been said before, we belong to the Church of England because in it we find Biblical Truth and Apostolic Order, and so can, we trust, therein receive the Holy Communion in the spirit in which it was given to us.

So now let us look at the Service, realising that it is the solemn act of worship in which, after due preparation, we repeat the scene in the Upper Room, reverently claiming, and expecting the fulfilment of, the Promise that when we thus gather together, and do these things, in His Name, He Himself will be present to give us His Blessing, His Comfort and His Peace. We will set forth the Service, and explain it, step by step.

The Prelude.—This is the Lord's Prayer and the "Collect for Purity," said by the priest alone; originally as part of his own prayer in the vestry, the people joining in the second 'Amen.'

The Ten Commandments.—The solemn announcement by His appointed Messenger of God's requirements in those who come to worship Him. After each one, the congregation asks for forgiveness of the past and guidance for the future. This is the General Preparation.

The Collect for the King.—This is not only a personal prayer for him, but for him as the official head of a free people. He represents our nation, our earthly kingdom, as a whole.

The Collect, Epistle and Gospel of the week.—There is a regular cycle of these for the whole year to ensure the methodical teaching of the whole Christian Faith.

The Creed.—The recital of our Faith; the service is for professed Christians.

The Sermon.—This should be delivered, and received, as part of our worship, not merely listened to as something interesting. In it the messenger of God should unfold His Will, point out the Way of Salvation through Jesus Christ to the hearers, and by teaching and exhortation, prepare the hearts of Communicants to receive aright the Holy Communion.

The Collection.—This should be looked upon as an act of Worship. It is the First Offering. Of all that God

has enabled us to earn in the past week, here we offer a portion to Him for His Service—for " all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee " (1 Chron. xxix, 14).

The Prayer for Christ's Church Militant here in Earth.—After receiving and presenting the Collection—the Alms—the priest takes sufficient bread and wine from the " Credence Table " and places them on the Holy Table. Really these are part of the Collection, and originally they actually were so, but now the cost of the ' elements ' is paid for from it. The Collection is in money, as a rule, simply for reasons of convenience, but it represents the fruits of our labour, which we offer unto God, and of this a part is taken to be consecrated to become the vehicles of His Grace in the Holy Communion. Then the Prayer follows, of which the first part is a petition that God will accept the alms and ' oblations ' that have been placed upon His Table, and the prayers that are being made unto Him. Then all the needs of His Church on earth are brought before Him together with a thankful remembrance of His Servants entered into rest.

At this point the first part of the Service closes, and those who are not going to receive the Holy Communion quietly withdraw, " and the doors are shut." This is only perhaps a matter of ordinary usage, but in it you can see a solemn preparatory act. It was " when the doors were shut " that the Risen Lord first appeared in the midst among His own and proclaimed Peace to them. So very reverently, you can feel that the same thing is going to happen in the Service. In the quietness and sacredness of the church, with the busy world shut out, you can gather together, and come apart to rest in, and with, Him ; to experience His Presence and hear His words of Peace. The ' dew ' falls only on a still night (see Hosea, xiv, 5).

The Exhortation now follows, in which we are bidden to draw near with repentance and faith, confessing our sins. This is the special preparation.

The Confession.—This strikes a deeper note than the General Confession in the Daily Prayers, although both should be sincere acts before God. In the light of the preceding Service, hearing God's requirements in those who come to worship Him, we tell Him all that is amiss, and ask His Forgiveness.

The Absolution.—As with the Confession, we seem to strike a deeper note than in the daily Service. It is the solemn pronunciation, by God's appointed Messenger, of His forgiveness of those who with hearty (*i.e.* from the heart) repentance and true faith turn to Him.

The Comfortable Words.—This beautiful part of the Service is found only in our English form. The four "words" apply to all the varying needs of those who come to Him: (1) to those in trouble; (2) to those in doubt; (3) to those losing hope; (4) to those who have failed and want to try again. They are comforting messages, bidding us not to be haunted, after our forgiveness, with things that are now past.

The "Sursum Corda," as it is often called, being the Latin words for 'Lift up your hearts.'—Here the actual Communion part begins after the general and special preparation. The note of Praise now comes in. You must remember that Praise, Worship and Thanksgiving are an essential part of Holy Communion. The word 'Eucharist,' another word for this service, means Thanksgiving. Praise can only fittingly come from reconciled and forgiven people; it is only when our souls are at peace with God that we can really enter into Communion with Him and acceptably bless His Holy Name.

The Proper Prefaces are used at the great Festivals,

so that we can remember the greatest things for which we should praise God. Then we all join together in the sacred words of adoration—*the Ter Sanctus*—which remind us that we are not alone, but part of the innumerable host that worship God, not only in earth, but also in heaven.

The Prayer of Humble Access.—This solemn prayer bids us not to let praise become presumption, not to let the gladness of reconciliation pass into irreverence. Perfectly trusting Him, as we can, yet we draw near only through His redeeming Love, not through our own deserving.

The Prayer of Consecration.—This is the repetition of what took place in the Upper Room. In His name, Jesus Christ's appointed messenger repeats the scene; he takes the Bread and Wine and consecrates them even as He bade us do, with the Prayer that they may be to us what they were to the Apostles when He did these things Himself.

The Administration.—After first receiving the consecrated elements himself, the officiating priest administers them to any other clergy present, that are helping him, and then to the worshippers. They come to the Communion Rails, and kneel there reverently waiting until they receive. The Blessed elements will be given to you into your 'hands,' for you 'take,' as well as receive; the 'taking' symbolises your part of the Communion, your willingness to receive. After the Administration, the holy vessels, with what remains in them, are covered with a veil, and after all the worshippers have resumed their seats the last part of the Service, called the Post Communion, begins.

The Lord's Prayer.—This is said by all with the Doxology, for it is an act of praise to God in His Presence from His own.

The Collects.—Two prayers are inserted here. The first one originally, with the Prayer for Christ's Church Militant, formed part of the Prayer of Consecration, and the second one was added at the Reformation. Now we use one or the other. The 'main thought' of the first is 'offering.' The whole Service is filled with the spirit of 'offering.' We begin with the 'Alms and Oblations'—the symbols of our work and life; the Communion itself is a memorial of the offering of Jesus Christ Himself for us upon the Cross; here we offer ourselves, body and soul, unto God, for His Service.

The main thought of the second prayer is 'fellowship'; that we may continue through all our life in that Communion with God which is life itself, of which the Service, in which we have taken part, is the Sacrament.

Gloria in Excelsis, as it is called, follows. It is the great note of praise and thanksgiving, gathering up into itself all our previous worship.

The Benediction.—The actual 'Communion' Service began with the doors being shut, in order that the Lord might come and stand in the midst, and speak 'Peace' unto His people. The solemn pronunciation, in blessing of this 'Peace,' marks its close; that the Peace of God may go and abide with us, as we pass out into the busy world again.

Wait reverently until His ministering servants have left the sanctuary, and then, through the opened doors, go forth, as those that have been in the presence of the Lord, with the prayer in your heart: "Grant, O Lord, that as we leave Thy House, we may not leave Thy Presence, but in Thy Love continually abide and dwell, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

THE HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. Amen.

Almighty God, unto Whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from Whom no secrets are hid; Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Here are recited

THE COMMANDMENTS

after which the people respond:

Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

Except after the last, when the response is:

Lord, have mercy upon us, and write all these Thy laws in our hearts, we beseech Thee.

COLLECT FOR THE KING.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, Whose kingdom is everlasting, and power infinite; Have mercy upon the whole Church; and so rule the heart of Thy chosen servant GEORGE, our King and Governor, that he (knowing Whose minister he is) may above all things seek Thy honour and glory: and that we, and all his subjects (duly considering Whose authority he hath) may faithfully serve, honour, and humbly obey him, in Thee, and for Thee, according to Thy blessed Word and ordinance; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Who with Thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Or,

Almighty and everlasting God, we are taught by Thy holy Word, that the hearts of Kings are in Thy rule and governance, and that Thou dost dispose and turn them as it seemeth best to Thy godly wisdom: We humbly beseech Thee so to dispose and govern the heart of GEORGE Thy Servant, our King and Governor, that, in all his thoughts, words, and works, he may ever seek Thy honour and glory, and study to preserve Thy people committed to his charge, in wealth, peace, and godliness: Grant this, O merciful Father, for Thy dear Son's sake, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Here follows
The Collect for the Day.

After which he reads—
The Epistle.

During which the people sit.

After the Epistle stand for
The Gospel.

Before which is said or sung—
Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

After the Gospel is said or sung—
Thanks be to Thee, O God.

THE NICENE CREED.

I BELIEVE in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By Whom all things were made: Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man, And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, And ascended into Heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead: Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one Catholick and Apostolick Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the Resurrection of the dead, And the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE OFFERTORY SENTENCES

LET your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (St. Matt. v, 16). (*Or others.*)

¶ *Whilst these Sentences are in reading, the Deacons, Churchwardens, or other fit person appointed for that purpose, shall receive the Alms for the Poor, and other devotions of the people, in a decent bason to be provided by the Parish for that purpose;*

and reverently bring it to the Priest, who shall humbly present and place it upon the holy Table.

¶ *And when there is a Communion, the Priest shall then place upon the Table so much Bread and Wine, as he shall think sufficient. After which done, the Priest shall say,*

Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church militant here in earth.

ALMIGHTY and everliving God, Who by Thy holy Apostle hast taught us to make prayers, and supplications, and to give thanks, for all men; We humbly beseech Thee most mercifully (**to accept our alms and oblations, and*) to receive these our prayers, which we offer unto Thy Divine Majesty; beseeching Thee to inspire continually the universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord: And grant, that all they that do confess Thy holy Name may agree in the truth of Thy holy Word, and live in unity, and godly love. We beseech Thee also to save and defend all Christian Kings, Princes, and Governors; and specially Thy servant GEORGE our King; that under him we may be godly and quietly governed: And grant unto his whole Council, and to all that are put in authority under him, that they may truly and indifferently minister justice, to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of Thy true religion, and virtue. Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all Bishops and Curates, that they may both by their life and doctrine set forth Thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer Thy holy Sacraments: And to all Thy people give Thy heavenly grace; and specially to this congregation here present; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear, and receive Thy holy Word; truly serving Thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. And we most humbly beseech Thee of Thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all them, who in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. And we also bless Thy holy Name for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear; beseeching Thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom: Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

¶ *Then shall the Priest say to them that come to receive the Holy Communion,*

YE that do truly and earnestly (1) repent you of your sins, and (2) are in love and charity with your neighbours, and (3) intend to lead a new life, following the Commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in His holy ways; Draw near with faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort; and

* *If there be no alms or oblations, then shall the words* [of accepting our alms and oblations] *be left out unsaid*

make your humble confession to Almighty God, meekly kneeling upon your knees.

THE GENERAL CONFESSION.

(*To be said after the Minister.*)

ALMIGHTY God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, Which we, from time to time, most grievously have committed, By thought . . . word . . . and deed. . . . . Against Thy Divine Majesty, Provoking most justly Thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, And are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; The remembrance of them is grievous unto us; The burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; For Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, Forgive us all that is past; And grant that we may ever hereafter Serve and please Thee in newness of life, To the honour and glory of Thy Name; Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE ABSOLUTION.

ALMIGHTY God, our heavenly Father, Who of His great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto Him; Have mercy upon you; pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ *Then shall the Priest say,*

Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all that truly turn to Him.

COME unto Me all that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you (St. Matt. xi, 28).

So God loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life (St. John, iii, 16).

Hear also what Saint Paul saith.

This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim. i, 15).

Hear also what Saint John saith.

If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins (1 St. John, ii, 1).

¶ *After which the Priest shall proceed, saying,*

Lift up your hearts.

Answer. We lift them up unto the Lord.

Priest. Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

Answer. It is meet and right so to do.

¶ *Then shall the Priest turn to the Lord's Table, and say,*

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God.

¶ *Here shall follow the Proper Preface, according to the time, if there be any specially appointed: or else immediately shall follow.*

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name; evermore praising Thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory: Glory be to Thee, O Lord most High. Amen.

¶ *Then shall the Priest, kneeling down at the Lord's Table, say in the name of all them that shall receive the Communion this Prayer following.*

We do not presume to come to this Thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in Thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under Thy Table. But Thou art the same Lord, Whose property is always to have mercy: Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink His blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His body, and our souls washed through His most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us. *Amen.*

¶ *When the Priest, standing before the Table, hath so ordered the Bread and Wine, that he may with the more readiness and decency break the Bread before the people, and take the Cup into his hands, he shall say the Prayer of Consecration, as followeth.*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Who of Thy tender mercy didst give Thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there (by His one oblation of Himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in His holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that His precious death, until His coming again; Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech Thee; and grant that we receiving these Thy creatures of bread and wine, according to Thy Son our

Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of His death and passion, may be partakers of His most blessed Body and Blood: Who, in the same night that He was betrayed,[1] took Bread, and, when He had given thanks,[2] He brake it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, eat,[3] this is My body which is given for you: Do this in remembrance of Me. Likewise after supper He[4] took the Cup; and, when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this: for this[5] is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins: Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of Me. *Amen.*

THE COMMUNION.

¶ *Then shall the Minister first receive the Communion in both kinds himself, and then proceed to deliver the same to the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, in like manner (if any be present), and after that to the people also in order, into their hands, all meekly kneeling. And, when he delivereth the Bread to any one, he shall say,*

The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.

¶ *And the Minister that delivereth the Cup to any one shall say,*

The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.

¶ *If the consecrated Bread or Wine be all spent before all have communicated, the Priest is to consecrate more according to the Form before prescribed; beginning at* (Our Saviour Christ in the same night, *etc.*) *for the blessing of the Bread: and at* (Likewise after Supper, *etc.*) *for the blessing of the Cup.*

¶ *When all have communicated, the Minister shall return to the Lord's Table, and reverently place upon it what remaineth of the consecrated Elements, covering the same with a fair linen cloth.*

¶ *Then shall the Priest say the Lord's Prayer, the people repeating after him every Petition.*

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us

[1] *Here the Priest is to take the Paten into his hands:*
[2] *And here to break the Bread:*
[3] *And here to lay his hand upon all the Bread.*
[4] *Here he is to take the Cup into his hand:*
[5] *And here to lay his hand upon every vessel (be it Chalice or Flagon) in which there is any Wine to be consecrated.*

our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

¶ *After shall be said as followeth.*

O Lord and heavenly Father, we Thy humble servants entirely desire Thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching Thee to grant, that by the merits and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His blood, we and all Thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His passion. And here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee; humbly beseeching Thee, that all we, who are partakers of this holy Communion, may be fulfilled with Thy grace and heavenly benediction. And although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto Thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech Thee to accept this our bounden duty and service; not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by Whom, and with Whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto Thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. *Amen.*

Or this.

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank Thee, for that Thou dost vouchsafe to feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of Thy favour and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs through hope of Thy everlasting kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of Thy dear Son. And we most humbly beseech Thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with Thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as Thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to Whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

¶ *Then shall be said or sung.*

Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace, good will towards men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son Jesu Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away

the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord; Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

¶ *Then the Priest (or Bishop if he be present) shall let them depart with this Blessing.*

THE peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord: and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always. *Amen.*

CHAPTER XII

HOLY COMMUNION

2. *The Meaning*

Two of the greatest gifts and virtues in religious life are Imagination and Sympathy. Imagination gives us " distance," " vision," and saves us from losing sight of the spiritual reality enshrined in a form or ceremony ; sympathy enables us to appreciate the position of those who differ from us in the way of approaching God. It is very greatly due to the lack of these great virtues that the sad fact has to be recorded that the bitterest quarrels have taken place over the most sacred things of human life—those that bring us into touch with God. Inevitably men fight most keenly where they feel most strongly, but lack of the above-mentioned virtues has often led them to fight over the ' body ' when the ' spirit ' has departed.

Innumerable books have been written from every point of view, and with great devotion and learning, about the Holy Communion, until very often, in the words of a proverb, " one cannot see the wood for the trees." Here we do not desire to examine at much length into the many problems raised ; rather we would keep to the great simple truths involved, with the idea that such are most helpful, and also, after all, most true.

For remember that, in its application, Christianity is a very simple thing; the Gospel was preached to the poor, that is, to the ordinary every-day people: "The wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein," said the old prophet of the great highway of God. And yet, often simple truths and simple duties are the hardest to learn and do. Like Naaman, in ancient days, we are often more willing to do great things than simply to 'Wash, and be clean.'

Therefore, do not approach the question of Holy Communion as if it were something uncanny, difficult, out of touch with your ordinary needs and ideas. Realise that it is, in truth, "very simple," very simple!

The most natural thing to do is to keep in mind that the service is meant to be a repetition of the scene in the Upper Room. That is the key to it, and whenever we 'celebrate the Holy Communion' we do it to recall that scene, and to claim His Promise that when we do our part, and meet 'in His Name,' He will fulfil His part, and come and be in the midst.

If we, therefore, in spirit, take a place amid the Apostles in the Upper Room when the Lord was there instituting the "Last Supper," we can see a threefold meaning attached to it. When we come to Holy Communion to-day, in that spirit, we can still see those three meanings, connected with the past, the future and the present respectively.

1. *The Meaning of the Past.*—Jesus Christ associated the Holy Communion with 'His Cross and Passion' by way of anticipation, because it was in the night (before) He was betrayed. But we look *back* to the Cross. Therefore we can call this the 'meaning of the past.' This is the obvious significance of the Lord's action. That meal was not only the last supper of our Lord's

earthly Life, but it was really the last "Passover," although the disciples did not thus realise it. He Himself, to whom the Passover, in its yearly celebration, had looked for hundreds of years, was about to offer the "one full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." So He instituted this solemn ceremony, as a perpetual memorial of it, before God and man, to take the place of the old Passover, and by a definite act, always to enable us to keep in mind His Cross and Passion. The broken bread and the poured forth wine were to typify His Body broken and Blood shed, and of them to be a continual witness both to heaven and to earth. It is impossible to celebrate the Holy Communion without being reminded of the Cross, and in it we are ever bidden to look 'back to the Past' and to that Cross "whereby alone we obtain remission of our sins, and are made partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven."

2. *The Meaning of the Future.*—This meaning more naturally follows next. One inseparable part of our Lord's teaching was that 'He would come again,' and He gave us the Holy Communion to observe till He came again. St. Paul tells us "As often as ye do eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's Death till He come" (1 Cor. xi, 26). So just as first of all, it bids us look back to His Cross, so, secondly, it bids us look forward to His Coming Again. We live "in a serial story"—and the end is not yet. Holy Communion is the reminder, the link in between, and the great duty of Faithfulness is laid upon us. It is given to us "lest we forget." "Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing" (St. Matt. xxiv, 46).

3. *The Meaning of the Present.*—Our Blessed Lord was mindful of His Own. He was visibly going away, and for a long time. For them the strain of waiting would

be very great; the sense of loss, and of loneliness, would be very hard to bear, conscious though they might be both of His continued existence and of His return. So He assures them more than once that they will not be left alone; though away bodily, He dwelt on the fact that spiritually He would still be with them. He said He would send the Holy Spirit to 'take His place'; His last word before He ascended was that "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii, 20); in a celebrated statement He told them that they could always invoke His Presence by gathering together—even only two or three—in His Name. It is these things, especially this last saying, that throw much light on the meaning which the Lord attached to what He did in the Upper Room. Not only was it intended to be to us a memorial of the Cross in the past, and a pledge of His coming again in the future, but also 'the Sacrament of His Presence' with us in the present. We cannot rightly celebrate the Holy Communion in remembrance of Him without doing it 'in His Name'; accordingly, every time we do it, and 'call' Him, He will respond and spiritually be present with us, even as He was bodily in the Upper Room. He will come and be in the midst—to bless and say 'Peace be unto you.'

Thus the Holy Communion to us is a repetition of the Upper Room in all its meanings, and they cover the whole of our life—past, present and future. Therein it is to us the fourth "means of Grace," to give us the strength of spirit that we continually need for the 'Battle of Life.' Just as Private Prayer, Public Worship, Bible Reading in their several ways bring to us this strength, so does Holy Communion, and in it, as you can see on reflection, the other three are combined.

Then it is a "Sacrament." You can see how it fulfils the definition. It is a little visible picture of

what invisibly occurs to them that rightly receive it. Just as our bodies are nourished and strengthened with the Bread and Wine—the visible symbols of the food and drink of daily life—so our souls and spirits are invisibly nourished and strengthened by the Body and Blood of Christ; His own Nature and Presence. Try to avoid two extremes in your thoughts. Some Christians—mainly Nonconformists—think that Holy Communion is only a pious commemoration—just like keeping an Anniversary—and fail to see therein any Presence, or grace given, apart from what comes from celebrating such an event of the past. Others—Roman Catholics—run to the contrary extreme, and forgetting that it is a 'Sacrament,' think it is the 'thing itself,' and that the consecrated Bread and Wine actually and really are the Body and Blood of Christ, instead of being the 'Sacrament' of it, and actually are 'the grace,' instead of being the means of it. To use a common illustration (but do not press it), railway lines are the means by which the train comes to you; there *are* railway lines, and there *is* a train, but the railway lines are not the train: they exist to bring the train to you, just as the train exists to take you to your destination.

We write on one other thing before we close this chapter.

Realise that none of these four means of grace work "mechanically." When you employ any of them to obtain the strength of spirit that you need, you must do your share. The gifts, grace, are there, but to become effectual, you must be willing and able to receive. Your spirit must be ready to touch His when, by means of Prayer, Worship, Bible Reading or Holy Communion, His grace draws nigh to you.

So, in Holy Communion, come in this believing,

receptive frame of mind. Come, just as you would, if you had been invited to the Upper Room, for remember He is the same, yesterday, to-day and for ever.

Come 'simply.' Realise you are coming into His Presence. Actually, you will be in church with others, and when you go up to the Communion Rail to receive, the messenger of Christ will give into your hands the blessed elements. Spiritually, let these outward things disappear! It is the little Upper Room. Jesus Christ is there, and as you are kneeling before Him, He gives to your soul, and says, "Take, eat, this is My Body which is given for you; Do this in remembrance of Me": "Drink ye all of this; for this is My Blood of the New Testament which is shed for you, and for many, for the Remission of Sins; do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of Me."

THE CATECHISM.

Question. Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?

Answer. For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.

Question. What is the outward part or sign of the Lord's Supper?

Answer. Bread and Wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received.

Question. What is the inward part, or thing signified?

Answer. The Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.

Question. What are the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby?

Answer. The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the Bread and Wine.

Question. What is required of them who come to the Lord's Supper?

Answer. To examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life; have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death; and be in charity with all men.

CHAPTER XIII

HOLY COMMUNION

3. *The Practice*

As with the other means of grace, so with this one, realise that regularity in receiving is just as necessary for your spiritual health as regular meals are for your bodily welfare. Holy Baptism is the ' Sacrament of beginning ' ; of your spiritual birth, and therefore in the nature of things, it occurs only once. Holy Communion is the ' Sacrament of Continuing ' ; of maintaining and nourishing the life that has begun, and so its essence lies in its being regularly repeated.

As frequently we have said before, the secret of Life is ' Communion with God.' Of course, by this we mean " Communion " in the widest sense : we do not therein refer particularly to the Service of Holy Communion.

But of that continual Communion which is Life indeed, the Holy Communion is the Sacrament. After Confirmation, realise that your grown up, spiritual, Communion Life is *beginning*, and your Life will be good and strong just in proportion as it is in touch with the Life of God. Your Communion Life should thus go on ' till He comes again,' or till you go to Him. In

the practice of Holy Communion, you will find many different methods, customs and habits in various places and among various people. Do not let these become of the first consideration to the exclusion of the things that matter, but remember always that *the thing itself is greater than either time or place,* just as Jesus Christ Himself, the Lord and Master, is greater than either Sacrament or Church.

Thus "Fasting Communion" has been the custom for centuries, and undoubtedly the habit is good, and conducive to reverence, as it necessitates time of preparation beforehand, but it is not essential or compulsory in the Church of England. The custom of coming fasting soon led to the habit of receiving Holy Communion only in the morning, but neither of these customs is essential to right reception, commendable though they be as a general rule. Again, the Sacrament is greater than time or place, and the secret of proper preparation and reception is in the soul, and not in the outward detail.

Modern life is very complicated, and present conditions of industry often make day night, and night day! The Church of England, therefore, very wisely does not forbid the fairly modern custom of Evening and non-fasting Communion, even if the practice of past centuries is against them. All said and done, the Holy Communion was instituted in the evening, and if the Church will realise that it is a living Society, it will be guided by present needs, as well as by ancient custom, and act upon the principle that the Sacraments are greater than time or place. Once, on board ship, some passengers regretted that they could not have a celebration, as there were no Communion vessels or linen available. I was glad to be able to say that the essential observance of the Service did not depend on those things;

I used wine glasses, plates and serviettes, and we had a beautiful and reverent Service. Out at the Front I hold the Service in all sorts of places, in the open air, in the morning, afternoon and evening, wherever time and opportunity appear. One realises then very forcibly the difference between the things that matter and those that are, after all, of secondary importance.

Under this heading of 'The Practice,' I would write on two other points. Very often one is invited to come to the Service without receiving; the custom of "Non-Communicating attendance." Of course, it is not "wrong," if you come reverently to worship God at such a Service. But this habit does tend to deprive the Service of its real fullness of meaning. It was almost the universal custom before the Reformation, and even when the people did "receive," they were never given 'the Cup.' At the Reformation, the Church of England very rightly strove to restore the full meaning of the Holy Communion. Actual reception is necessary for this, because it is a 'Sacrament' of *Communion*, not merely of 'looking on,' or even of reverently worshipping at a distance. "The people, the women, stood afar off, beholding these things" (St. Luke, xxiii, 48, 49) was written of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ, but His best loved ones followed Him to the end, identified themselves with Him even at the risk of terrible consequences, and were beneath the Cross. So it is not enough to stand afar off, even to worship; you should come and actually receive the Holy Communion, as a Sacrament that your life 'touches His, and His yours,' and that visibly, as well as invisibly, you identify yourself with Him.

Again, in some few Churches they do not use the ordinary bread, as is directed, but special little round discs, made of flour and water, known as "wafers."

Those who do so claim that they are more literally following the original Service, for unleavened bread was used at the Last Supper, being Passover time. This, of course, is true, because no leavened bread was permitted to be used, or even kept in the house during the Passover; thus unleavened bread was eaten at the Last Supper; but it was also the *ordinary* bread of the meal, and season.

And this is the point that should be observed. It was the *ordinary* 'food and drink' of daily life that Jesus Christ took to consecrate as the memorials of His Cross and the vehicles of His Grace. In it is a beautiful, symbolic meaning that the use of *e.g.* wafers tends to obscure. It is the *ordinary* things, the daily food and drink, that God takes and uses as the means of grace, not something out of the way and unusual. It is the ordinary "daily round, and common task" that can and should be consecrated to God's service, and when thus consecrated they become acceptable to Him, and used by Him for the blessing of our souls. In the Holy Communion Service, at the placing of the elements on the Holy Table, the Bread and Wine thus offered are offered as the symbol of our *ordinary* food and drink, in accordance with the original Institution. It is these ordinary things—nothing special—that thus are consecrated and received back by us as Heavenly Food, to show us that all our ordinary lives can be, and should be, consecrated unto Him and become to us channels of His Grace.

In your actual practice of coming to Holy Communion, as said before, aim at *regularity*. Do not look on it as an "extraordinary thing," but as a very ordinary, necessary part of your spiritual life. If you are blessed with Christian parents, come with them as a family; that is the ideal. If, as so often happens, your family is

careless in such matters, you may have a difficult part to play. Do not, in God's name, " give yourself airs," and aggressively pose before them, insisting on your own way, and emphasising the difference. Quietly and lovingly accommodating yourself to them, going at a time that suits them to come with you, or even for the sake of domestic arrangements, will be more acceptable to the Master, and more likely to lead them aright, than selfishly consulting only your own preferences. " Even Christ pleased not Himself." It is very true of many a Young Communicant in relation to his, or her parents, that " a little child shall lead them."

The early Christians used to come every Sunday and that is the ideal. But to begin with, aim, say, at once a month, coming as well on the Great Festivals and special occasions, such as anniversaries and when you have any particular need. Always " prepare yourself " carefully beforehand. Look forward to it. Let it be a very holy, happy time. Realise that you are going specially to meet your best and greatest Friend and Saviour, and to join with all His Faithful Ones in worshipping Him. ' Save up ' things to tell Him. On your way to the Church, realise that you are going to meet Him, for He said that where we did these things in His name, He would be there. Join in the ' public worship ' of the Service. Do not forget that you are one of a great army, and do not devote *all* the time, and *all* your thoughts to your own particular needs. Think of others, and of ' Him.'

But, in the quiet times, as in your preparation beforehand, bring everything to Him. 1. Tell Him all your failures, struggles and temptations. 2. Ask Him for His forgiveness, and grace not to lose courage, and the will to try again. 3. Then thank Him for all your blessings, and mercies, and for any special thing, and answered

prayers. 4. Then pray for others; those with whom you live, and work, and spend your time, and for your loved ones. 5. Then bring to Him any *special* things, or difficulties that you may have. Very reverently realise you are in the Presence of your greatest and best Friend, the "Lover of your Soul," and learn to "talk things over with Him." Thus, having brought everything before Him, 'leave them there,' and receive the Holy Communion as from His Blessed Hands, feeling that in His keeping everything is safe, and if only you are with Him, and He with you, all will be well. Let 'clergy and place and outward things disappear.' With closed eyes and bowed head, kneeling at the Communion Rail, reverently realise the Master of Life Himself is there, moving up and down, giving the Blessed Sacrament to you, even as He did to His disciples in the Upper Room. Then, after the Service, go back home realising that as you leave His House you need not leave His Presence, but in it and His Love you can continually abide and dwell, wherever you are, and whatever you have to do.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FUTURE

It is always sad to notice the numbers that fail to keep up the practice of waiting upon the Lord and renewing their strength of spirit by availing themselves of the various means of grace. So pitifully often does one find those who have been confirmed, ceasing to come to Holy Communion, neglecting their Bibles, disregarding Sunday worship, forgetting their prayers. It is only too true that much of this 'leakage' must be laid at the door of the Church, and by the Church I mean, not only the Clergy, but the whole Society of God. The average Congregation is often so indifferent to the need of looking after 'the stock,' and seeing that the young ones coming on are carefully shepherded and taught. Then again, as the Lord said, "a man's foes shall be they of his own household"; so often is this true of the Young Communicant. But although much *does* depend on the Clergy, the Congregation and the Home, yet it is *good* for you Young Communicants to feel and realise that *most depends on yourself!*

In the prophet Hosea (vi, 3) you will find these words: "Then shall we know if we follow on to know the LORD." Learn these words by heart, and always bear them in mind. Learn to "follow on," what the Army calls to

" carry on." This means " Faithfulness," and Faithfulness is what God rewards far more than success. The wonderful blessing at the end of life is " Well done, good and *faithful* (not necessarily successful) servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord " (St. Matt. xxv, 21). If you want to know, you must *follow on* to know, and not stop half way for any difficulty or pain. Think how the original B.E.F. " carried on " amid difficulties, hardships, sufferings far greater than any know save those who experienced them. The liberty of the world and the safety of our Empire are due to men who ' carried on,' faithful even unto death. Think how France ' carries on.' The history of the heroes of the Church of God is a history of men and women who ' carried on,' ' followed on,' in spite of everything. Be inspired by their great examples : read the history of your nation and your Church, and pray that you too may, in your way, be worthy of them, of the name you bear, and above all, of Him who is the Great Leader of them that follow on through Death itself to Life Eternal.

There are two little sentences I would give you as Farewell Watchwords to take with you through all your Communion Life.

1. " *In the Service.*"—Remember that you enlisted as a soldier when you were baptised, and ratified the terms of your enlistment when you were confirmed. You are in the army under a Commander-in-Chief. Jesus Christ is LORD and MASTER, as well as Saviour and Redeemer and Friend. It is required in a steward (or soldier) that he (she) be found Faithful. Leave Results and Successes to Him. You are not in life simply to make money, or to do what you like, but " on His Majesty's Service." Do not ' live to eat,' or to make money ; eat, and earn your own living honestly, and then ' live.' People will ask you " *What are you*

going to do for your living?" There is a greater question: "*What are you going to do with your life?*" Many, everybody, can answer the first question, and are puzzled when they are asked the second. Yet the second really matters. Let your answer be "Live it '*In the Service.*'" Do not imagine this means that you must necessarily be a clergyman, or a missionary, although there is no more splendid service than these, when undertaken from right motives and carried out in the right spirit. But whatever your work in life may be, undertake it and do it in the spirit of an offering to God. As such it will be acceptable to Him, for as the poet Browning tells us, "All service is the same with God." Always feel you are in His Army, His Servant, and whatever you do is for Him. Every man in the British Army does not actually fight; his job may be anything and anywhere—yet he is "in the Army," and the efficiency of the whole depends on each man 'doing his bit' faithfully and well. Every man in the Army is not an officer; Rudyard Kipling tells us truly "The backbone of the Army is the non-Commissioned man." Precisely the same is true of the Army of the Church of God. However great may be your gifts and opportunities, or however little, you are "IN THE SERVICE" and what you do, and how you do it, *does matter*, and the Divine Commander-in-Chief knows all about it.

So look on all your life "as a Service to God," even the things that you have to do in your daily work and duty. In the second Collect at Morning Prayer there are two beautiful sentences that you should learn by heart: "O God . . . *whom truly to know is everlasting life*," "*whose service is perfect freedom.*" The things we have to do make us slaves: the things we freely do show that we are MEN. Jesus Christ told us in

the Sermon on the Mount a strange thing (St. Matt. v, 41): "Whosoever shall compel you to go with him one mile, go with him twain, *i.e.* two!" The first mile is the 'slave mile'; the second is the 'free mile.' As it is, the first is worth nothing; the second is worth everything. But even the first mile may be done in the spirit of the second. Now it is here that *real*, happy, free, splendid life, the Christian life of service, comes in. All the world's great work, all life's real happiness is on the second mile, or in its spirit. "In the Service" is perfect freedom. Always try to be a "second miler"! Your daily work may be very monotonous and humdrum; but do it "for Christ's sake," and it becomes holy and acceptable unto Him. Then always try to do a bit of real, unpaid second mile work! Again, it may be very "ordinary," helping at home, doing a good turn, looking after a younger brother or sister. Try to do a little, definite *Church work*, calling for someone to go to Church, helping where you can. All this is second mile work, and *the Master of Life is always to be found upon the Second Mile.*

So there is your first great Watchword of Life: "IN THE SERVICE."

2. "*In the Presence.*"—As you are always "in the Service," so you are always "in the Presence." Never forget it. "Loneliness" is one of the greatest modern evils and causes of sin and trouble. There is no loneliness so terrible as that of being "alone in London"—alone in a great city. This is when some of the greatest temptations of life will attack you. The years that stretch between the time that you leave your parents' home and the time that you marry and get a home of your own are so 'dangerous' because they are so lonely. It is because young people are so lonely when away from home, in strange surroundings, and in uncomfortable

lodgings that they feel driven to any companionship rather than none. They wander round the streets, and into any places of public resort and amusement, rather than spend their spare time by themselves and their free evenings in the loneliness of their own rooms. Clubs and similar organisations may do much to prevent this, and herein lies their great moral (and spiritual) value, but even there, so much of life, especially young life under these circumstances, has to be spent 'alone.' Necessarily it is not entirely avoidable, and the great discipline of life is to learn to stand alone. It is here that the second great watchword of life comes in: "In the Presence." Realise that your life can, and should be always "in the Presence," as well as "in the Service." Never forget either of them. A soldier in the army is always 'in the Service,' but very seldom 'in the Presence' of the Commander-in-Chief. All the time that I have been with the Army on the Western Front, I have been 'in the Service,' but never knowingly have I seen either Lord French or Sir Douglas Haig; I saw Lord Kitchener once. This is where the case is different with the spiritual army. You can always be 'in the Presence.' In the army a private can present a petition to an officer only through a N.C.O.; you can go straight to Headquarters yourself in the spiritual army, and at any time and in any place. This is of the essence of the Christian Faith, a truth which has, however, often been obscured in the history of the Church. It "sounded too good to be true." Men, perhaps naturally, thought some intermediary was necessary, but it is not so. Between Christ Jesus Himself and the humblest soul that turns to Him, there is no bar, but continual immediacy of access. So spiritually you need *never* 'feel all alone,' for you are always "in the Presence." "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world,"

are the last recorded words of the earthly life of our Blessed Lord. Let this be your continual strength and stay. Do not look on 'His Presence' as that of a detective, or policeman, but as that of the best and truest Friend, who never fails, forsakes or leaves you. In this little book I have at times illustrated my meaning with stories from my own experiences. Let me close with one more. I remember a young officer being brought in one morning with his ankle badly smashed by a bullet. He was in great pain and cried out in his agony. I saw him again in the evening, looking a bit pale and worn, and in reply to my question he said: "It's pretty bad still, but my padre has been in, and has done me good. He said 'Look here, you must not carry on like this, you know: Jesus Christ had nails through both hands and feet—not simply a bullet through one ankle—and He did not cry out, did He?'"

Then this poor wounded boy added to me: "A fellow had to shut up after that, you know"; then, moving himself a little nearer to me, he said in a low, earnest voice: "Christ's a pal, isn't He?" After a little deep pause I replied, "Yes, old chap, He's the truest pal a man can ever have. He never fails, and He's always nearest when you want Him most. You stick to that; it will never lead you wrong." It is everlastingly true. The realisation of His Presence will comfort, help and guide you, keep you from evil doing, more than you can possibly tell. To quote the title of a little book that you will do well to read some time, continually aim at "The Practice of the Presence of God."

Your Confirmation gives you the right of Sacramental access to Him. Once again, go to Holy Communion as to a meeting with your greatest Friend, but never lose sight that it is a Sacrament of the living fact that He is with you always. Live on a prayer that I

often give to men at the Front: "Teach us, O Lord, that wherever we may go, we cannot go beyond Thy Love, and however far we may fall, we cannot fall beyond Thy Power to save." This is the great 'inner strength and peace of the Christian life.' "In the Presence is the Fulness of Joy," just as "in the Service is the Perfection of Freedom."

I cannot close these words to you better than by giving you, with my blessing, what we have as the Prayer for our "Young Communicants' Union" in my parish of All Saints', Stoneycroft, Liverpool:

"O Lord Jesus Christ, in whom alone is life Eternal, whose life is the light of men, I thank Thee for leading me to Thy Cross. Grant that I may never doubt Thy forgiveness, but greatly forgiven, may ever greatly serve. Grant that by the Holy Spirit's grace I may so live in Communion with Thee in Faith and Sacrament, so worship Thee in spirit and in truth, so follow Thee in life and work, that finally I may enter with all Thy servants into Thy Holy City, where Thou livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen."

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